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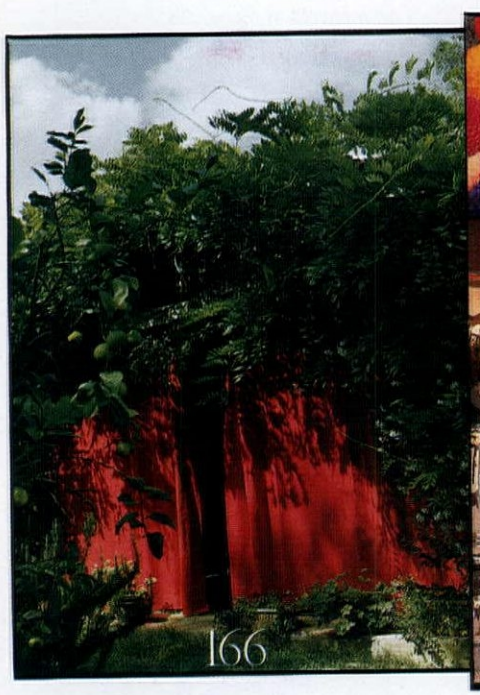
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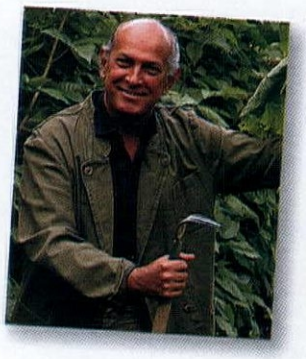
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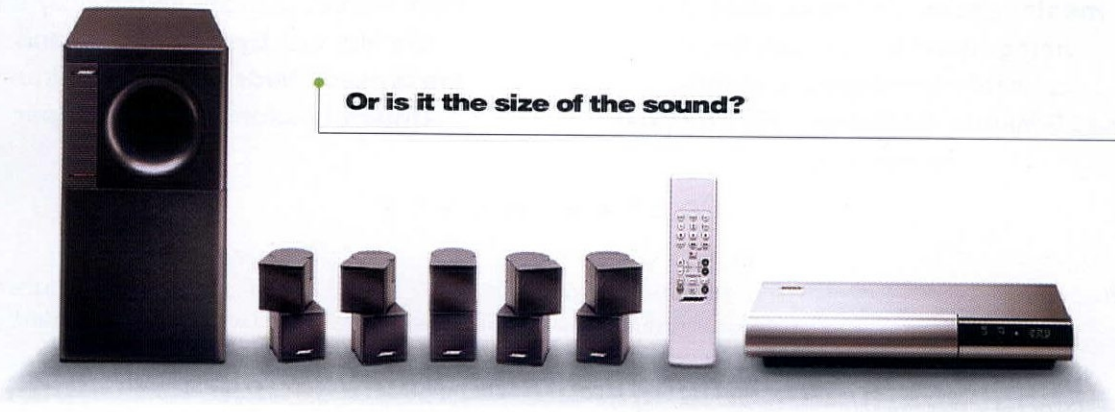




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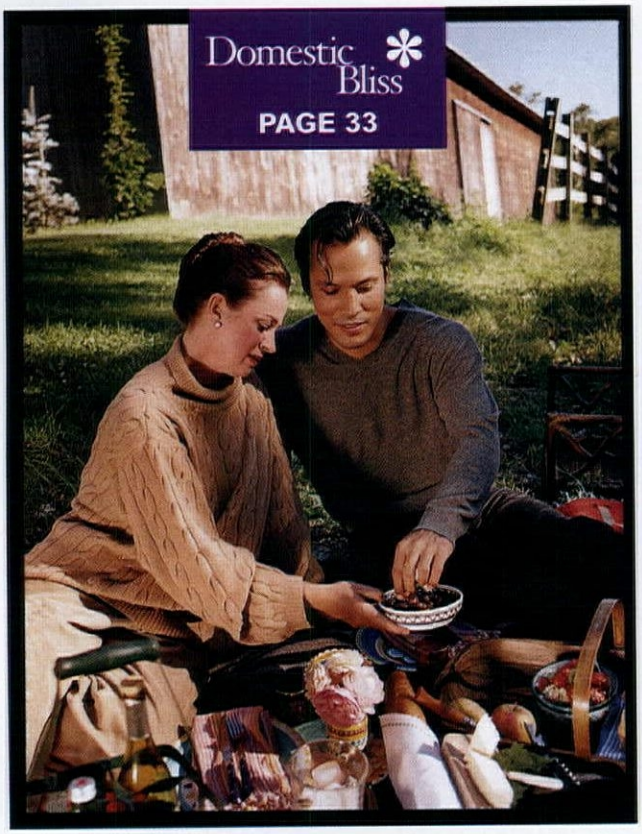
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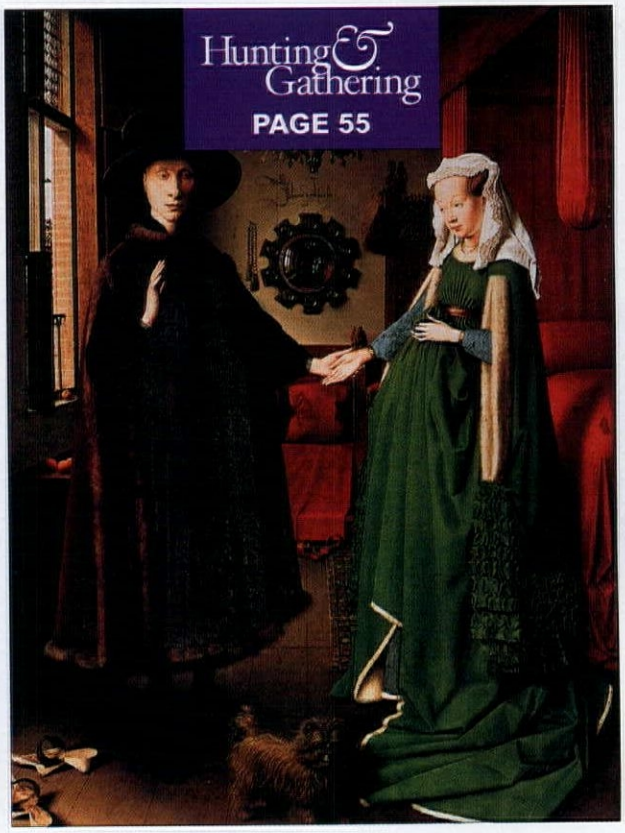
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DINING: IN AND OUT From choreographed meals, above, to the duplicitous dining room/library and Ralph Lauren's fashionable paints

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BY DAN SHAW



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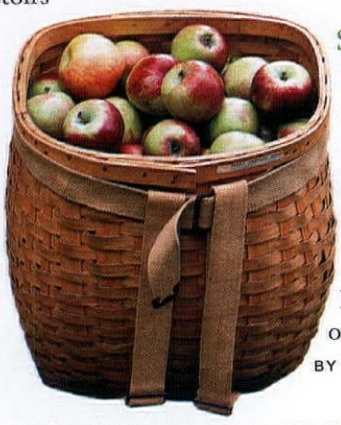
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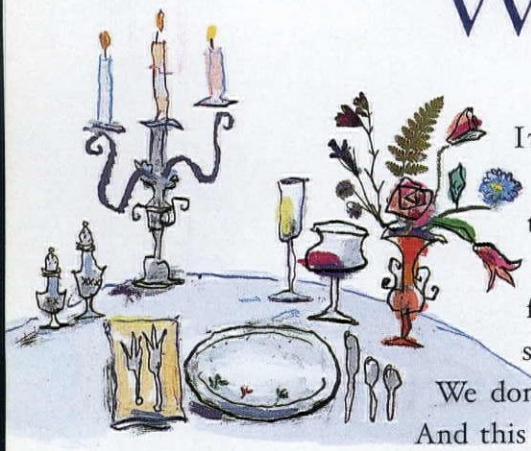
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Widow's Walk



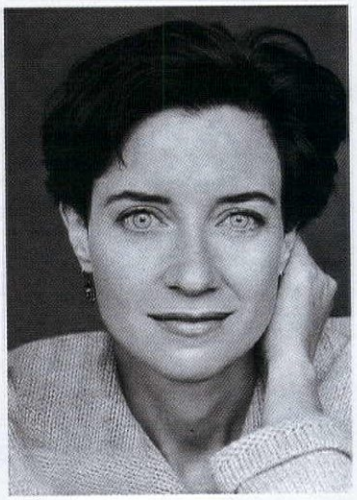
IT SEEMS AS IF WE NO LONGER KNOW what to do with our dining rooms, and that seems a shame. They've become the kinds of rooms that have to double as something else or sit empty much of the time. They've shrunk, all but given way to the "open plan" eat-in kitchen or family room or great room. Building-industry statistics offer a few more snapshots of our houses today: we want more—and bigger—bathrooms. We don't build libraries; we build home offices. Our garages are expanding. And this just in from a citizen of the Hamptons, cradle of much architectural trendsetting: the return of the widow's walk, reborn as a kind of fenced-in viewing platform affixed to the top of any sort of house. What do all these fashions tell us about the way we live now?

We've become a nation that eats on the run, full of households whose members belly up to island counters for serial refuelings. Well, there's liberation in being able to eat what you want when you want it. And think of the freedom from those unrelenting tutorials in Table Manners (they seem to have characterized dinner conversation when I was growing up). Elbows versus wrists. Chewing versus talking. But think of what we're missing (besides good breeding): a chance to indulge a fetish for fine china. The starch of heavy linen against your lips (or elbows . . . er, wrists). Self-expression through table setting. The creative play of conversation. The celebration of clan, family, or friend. The sense of a small daily victory, toasted or graced, over the rush of time passing.

One day, when I was living in Texas, a new friend took me aside to give me a little advice about being a good wife. "All day long," she said, "when my husband's at work, I wear washing-machine clothes." Noting my bewilderment, she clarified: "You know, blue jeans, T-shirts, cottons. They go into the machine at the end of the day." She paused for effect. "But when my husband comes home, I'm in Dry Clean Only." Sensible, simple, straightforward advice, deeply American, somehow, in its practical optimism. Maybe for our purposes we can think of that dining room as the dressy clothes. Nice for anyone to come home to a sense of occasion.

All in all, I'd count the demise of the dining room a net loss. But the expansion of the bathroom is another story, a vivid indicator of our search for better mental health. Our bathrooms seem to have become personal spas, the four-star hotel at home, the mini-vacation destination. Along with the growth in the bathroom's territory comes a boom in the bath fragrance world. I've never seen so many unguents and emollients available for every little woe. I find this charming and pleasing; I even light aromatherapy candles for my children's baths—in the hope of raising sensual men able to loll about in the tub, gullible enough to believe in small balms for life's many small vexations.

As for those postmodern widow's walks: As soon as I heard about them I began fantasizing about rich but forlorn Wall Street widows—and widowers—gazing out across the lonely potato fields, searching for . . . what? Who? A workaholic mate? A market forecast? The meaning of life? A better view? The idea of a widow's walk, unmoored from the treacherous lives of sea captains and whaling villages, seemed silly at first. But then one night in the course of an emotionally tangled conversation, an old friend confided that, in spite of healthy children, business success, a beautiful house filled with art, and a three-week (!) vacation, he felt he was "out at sea." Yes, I thought, and your friends are left behind on the widow's walk to scan the horizon in the hope of a glimpse of you. Some sort of malaise mingles with the many blessings we celebrate during the coming holidays. It seems we aren't taking our prosperity easily, and I guess that's because we haven't come by it easily. Our houses, like the whorls in a shell or the rings in a tree, trace arcs of confusion and joyfulness, solitude and companionship, haste and retreat. Match up the blueprint of today's house with that of your grandmother's and you'll see all the complexity of modern life. Then take a long soak, get dressed for the dining room, and give thanks for all who are gathered at your beautiful table. Some things shouldn't change.



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Dominique Browning, EDITOR

Monique Savarese shown on Elle sofa in white linen.

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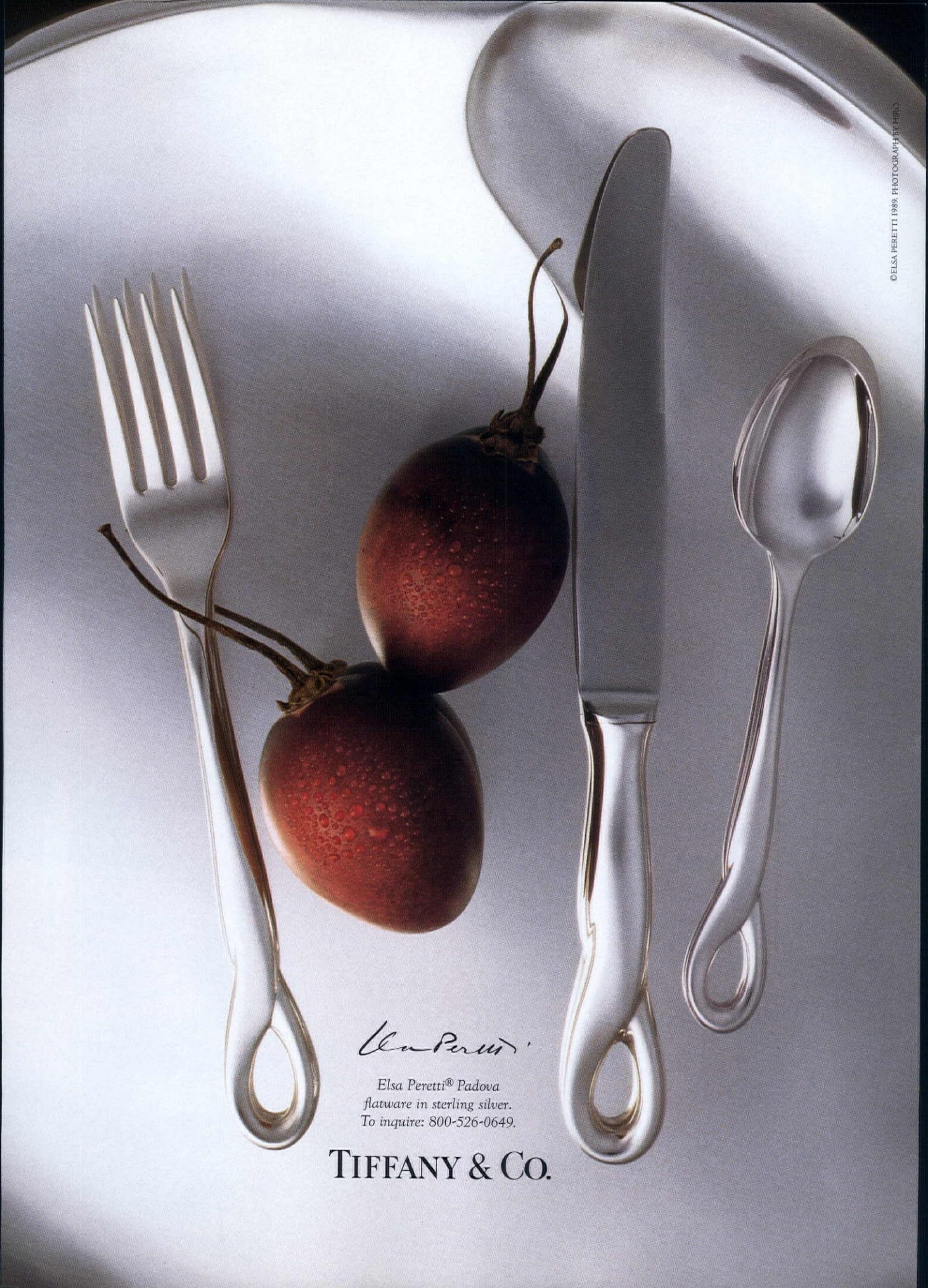
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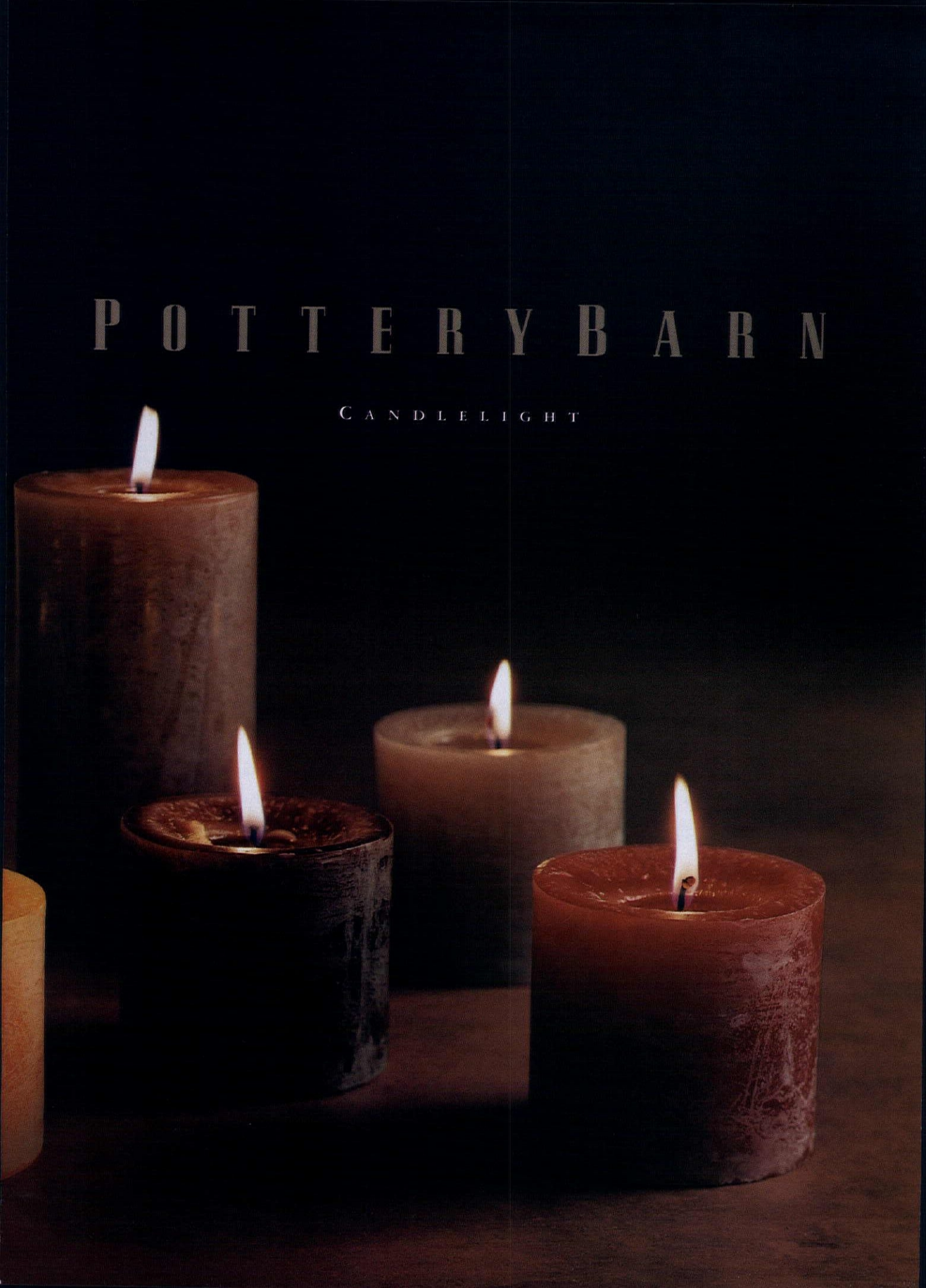
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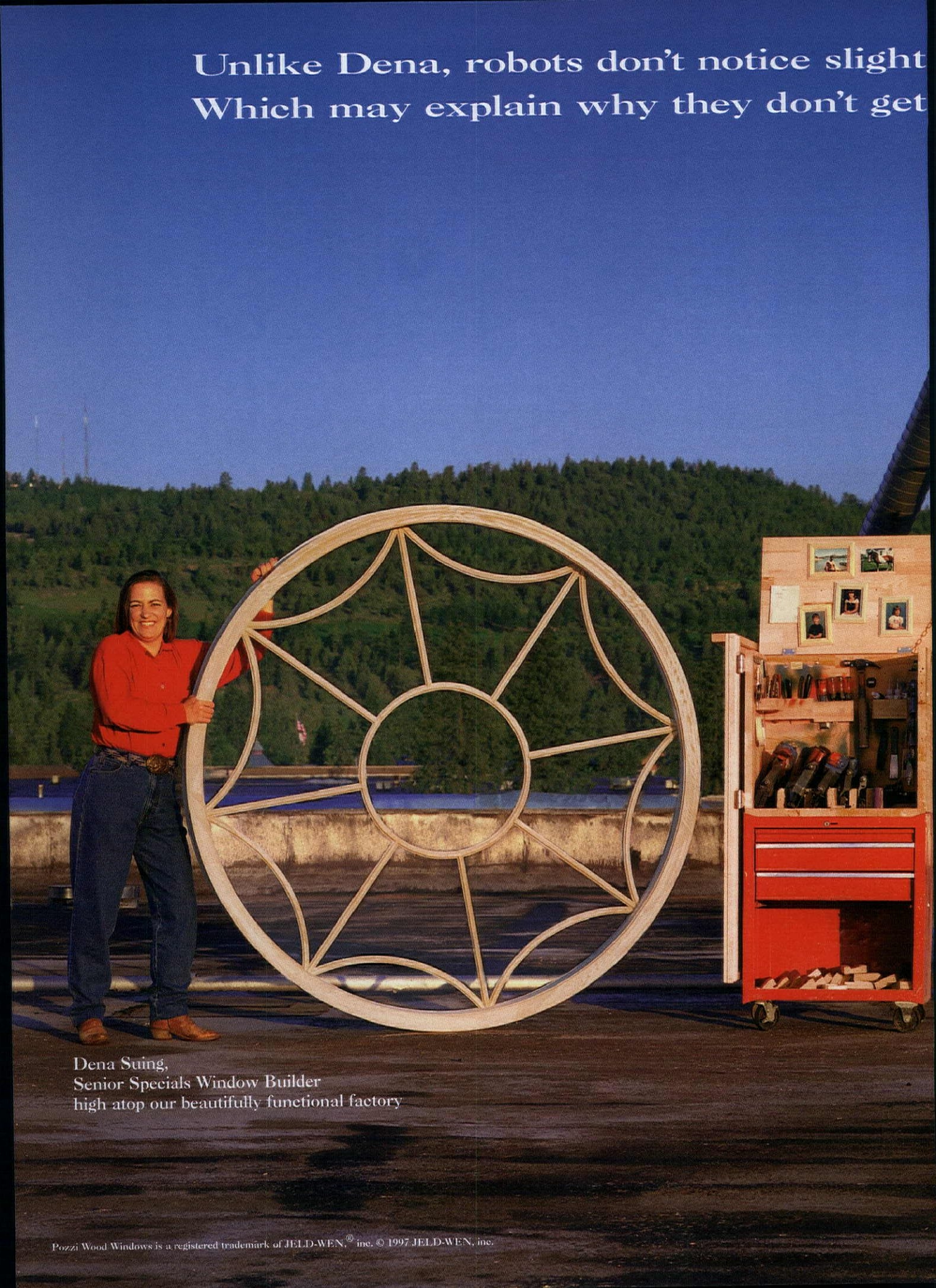
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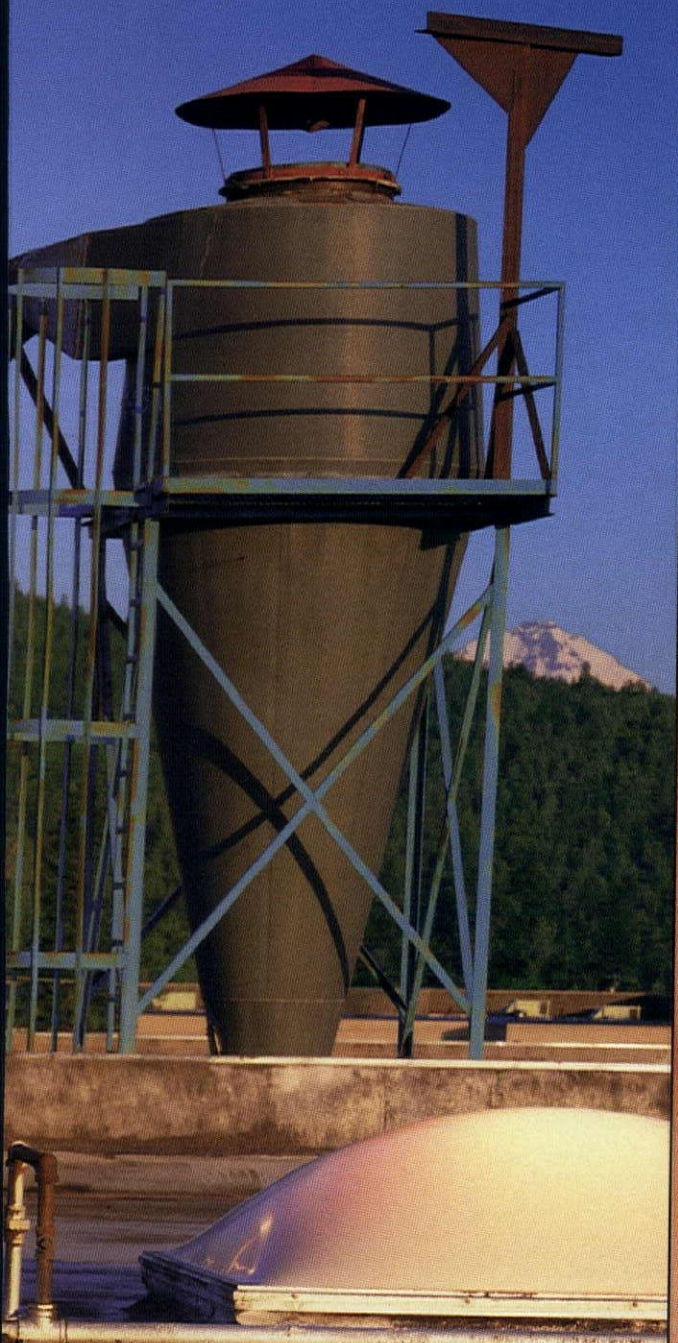
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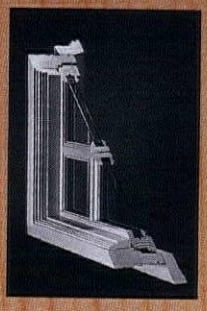

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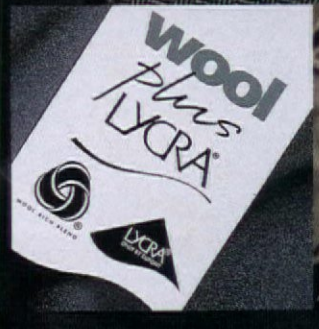

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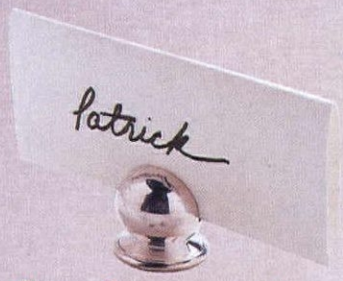




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DEVOTED TO WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOME BY DAN SHAW



in: place cards



out: place rocks



in: saltcellars



out: saltshakers



in: hôtel napkin rings



out: napkin tchotchkes

dining: in and out

To paraphrase Mark Twain, the death of the **dining room** has been greatly exaggerated. Since it is used so infrequently, many people now demand that the room do **double duty**, so dining rooms/libraries are at the top of our **In List**. Also this month, painting with **Ralph Lauren**, tailgating with Jock Soto and Heather Watts, and composting with the **20-Minute Gardener**.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NORMAN; STYLED BY ROBYN GLASER

what's hot & what's not

Round tables	Farm tables
Candlesticks	Votives
Steak knives	Butter knives
Fashion plates	Fiestaware
Cheese course	Crudités
Tea ice cream	Frozen yogurt
Sugar cubes	Rock-candy swizzle sticks
Edible centerpieces	Flower arrangements
Oversize linen napkins	Tea towels as napkins
Mixing new and vintage china	Matched sets of china
Colored crystal	Mexican bubble glass
Personal ashtrays	Cigar ashtrays
Wooden trays	Straw place mats
Banquettes	Café chairs
Knife rests	Dirty tablecloths
Sunday lunch	Brunch

DO YOU USE MATCHING SETS OF CHINA?

"I prefer each course to match; however, I get a little bored having soup and nuts on the same dishes"

—Dan Carithers
INTERIOR DESIGNER
ATLANTA

food for thought

A dinner party in a dining room/library is a recipe for delicious conversation

Most discussions about Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's contributions to the world of style are confined to her unerring fashion sense. But now it should be told: Jackie O's legacy includes a decorating conceit that has become a bona fide trend—the dining room-cum-library.

"The first time I ever did a combination dining room/library was for Jackie at 1040 Fifth Avenue," says Keith Irvine, a principal in the New York design firm of Irvine, Fleming & Jackson, who met Jackie when she was a senator's wife living in Georgetown, and he was toiling for Sister Parish. "Like me, Jackie never had enough space for books," says Irvine, who worked with her off and on for more than thirty years. "Her dining room turned into a library that she had dinner in."

Such rooms are especially practical and popular in New York City, where even people who live in grand prewar apartments never seem to have enough space (and where even superficial sorts like to surround themselves with books). "We rarely do conventional dining rooms anymore," says Irvine, who created a luxurious dining room/library for Peter and Jamee Gregory on Park Avenue in the early 1980s, which inspired scores of others. "Books really are the best background decoration you can have."

Many people believe that dinner-party conversation is elevated when the guests are surrounded by volumes of history, biography, and poetry. "People who put books in the dining room would rather talk about books than each other," suggests New York designer Ralph Harvard. "Formal dining rooms are often glacial. Parties in dining room/libraries are much warmer."



Peter and Jamee Gregory's trendsetting dining room/library designed by Keith Irvine.

Roger K. Lewis, a professor of architecture at the University of Maryland, notes that this residential trend has a public correlative. "In the last ten years, we've become used to eating and drinking in bookstores," he says. Even public libraries across the country are opening cafés with names like Cup and Chaucer.

Dan Carithers, an Atlanta interior designer and consultant to Baker Furniture, understands the growing American appetite for the dining room-cum-library. "What's better than favorite food, favorite friends, and favorite books in the same room?"

"Round and square dining tables are more comfortable—there's no head, conversation flows easily, and everyone has a seat with equal status"

—Michael Delgaudio, creative director, Century Furniture

STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPH: NORMAN; DINING ROOM: LAURIE LAMBRECHT



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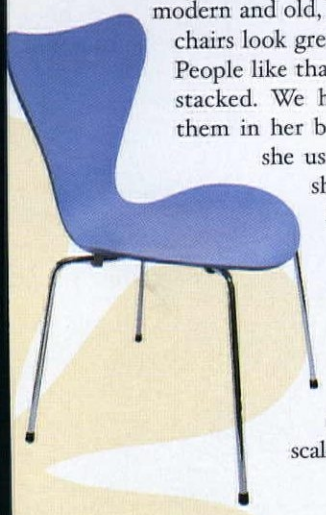
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why is this chair everywhere?

People feel safe with this chair," explains London interior designer Kelly Hoppen, who mixed Arne Jacobsen's classic molded-wood stacking chair with an antique red Chinese chest for the cover of her new book, *East Meets West: Global Design for Contemporary Interiors* (Rizzoli, $45). "There's this surge in mixing modern and old, East and West, and these chairs look great with Eastern furniture. People like that they can be washed and stacked. We have one client who has them in her breakfast room, and when she uses it as an exercise room she stacks the chairs."



First manufactured by the Danish firm Fritz Hansen in 1958, Jacobsen's stackable chair was a variation on his three-legged 1951 Ant Chair (a.k.a. Model 3.100), the first Danish chair designed for large-scale factory production.

The current Jacobsen juggernaut in the U.S. is fueled by the Garnet Hill and Saks Fifth Avenue Folio catalogues, which sell the iconic chair. Saks has it in lemon, black, red, blue, and green; Garnet Hill has it in stained vernal green, natural beech veneer, stained peach, and stained azure. In Britain, the chairs are available at the always influential Conran's.

Depending on the retailer, the chairs cost from $345 to $435, and Hoppen advises against buying half-price imitations, which are popping up on both sides of the Atlantic. "Authentic ones are still collectors' items," she says. Garnet Hill decided against selling knockoffs, according to director of merchandising Diane Brush, "because we thought it was important to maintain the integrity of the product." She and Hoppen use the same words to explain the most basic reason for the chair's continued popularity: "It's incredibly comfortable," they say, in transatlantic synchroneity.



DO YOU USE NAPKIN RINGS?

"I love them, but I'm very fussy about them. They're only good if they don't squash a napkin. They're awful when they're small"

—Peri Wolfman, author and retailer, NYC

BEST-SELLER



Baker Furniture's most popular dining table is a Sheraton-style double pedestal from its Historic Charleston Collection. Made from mahogany solids and veneers, the 70" x 46" x 29" table costs $6,447. The coordinating Governor Alston armchair is $1,754; the side chair is $1,489.

luscious linens

Many people who depend on Léron for their custom-made bed and table linens can't be bothered with schlepping fabric swatches and carpet samples to the shop on Madison Avenue. Fortunately for them, Léron makes house calls.

Service is as much a Léron trademark as its painstakingly embroidered and monogrammed linens. House calls are essential for the legions of fastidious clients who want their napkins and tablecloths to match their decor exactly. "People who collect good paintings and good furniture would never settle for plain white," declares Carolina Donadio, vice president for merchandising. "They have an *extraordinary* sense of color."

They also have a sense of whimsy, which is why the store's in-stock items include a beyond-belief assortment of napkins and place mats (such as the one pictured here) for holidays like Halloween, Saint Patrick's Day, Passover, and Thanksgiving. These linens are the haute fabric version of the treacly holiday paper goods produced by Hallmark. Considering their cost ($1,795 for a dozen place mats and napkins) and how often they can be used, they are also a beyond-belief indulgence.

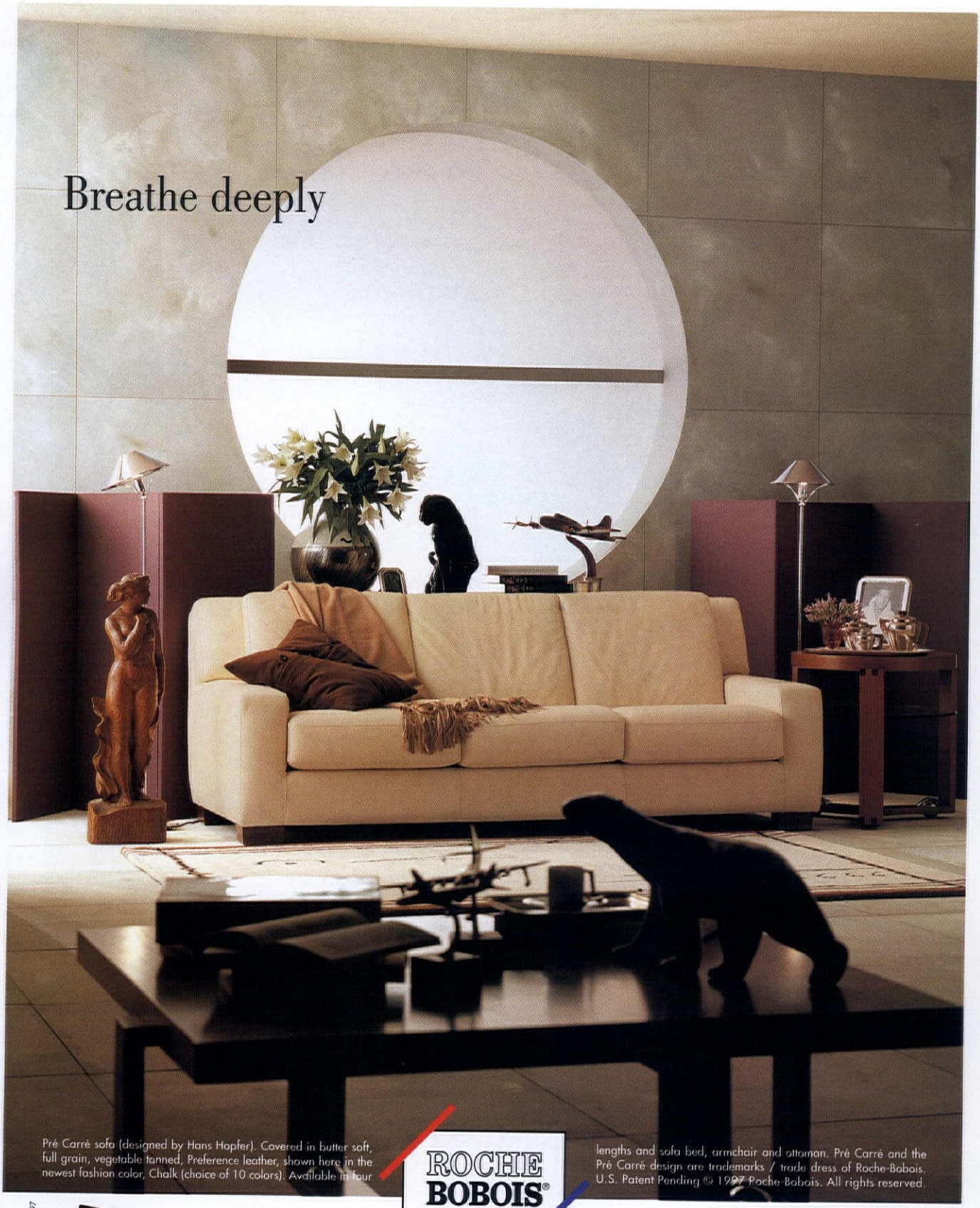
DO YOU USE NAPKIN RINGS?

"I think they are sort of foolish. I'm never convinced that the napkins in them are clean"

—Ralph Harvard
interior designer
NYC

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SPENCER JONES

Breathe deeply



Pré Carré sofa (designed by Hans Hopfer). Covered in butter soft, full grain, vegetable tanned, Preference leather, shown here in the newest fashion color, Chalk (choice of 10 colors). Available in four lengths and sofa bed, armchair and ottoman. Pré Carré and the Pré Carré design are trademarks / trade dress of Roche-Bobois. U.S. Patent Pending © 1997 Roche-Bobois. All rights reserved.

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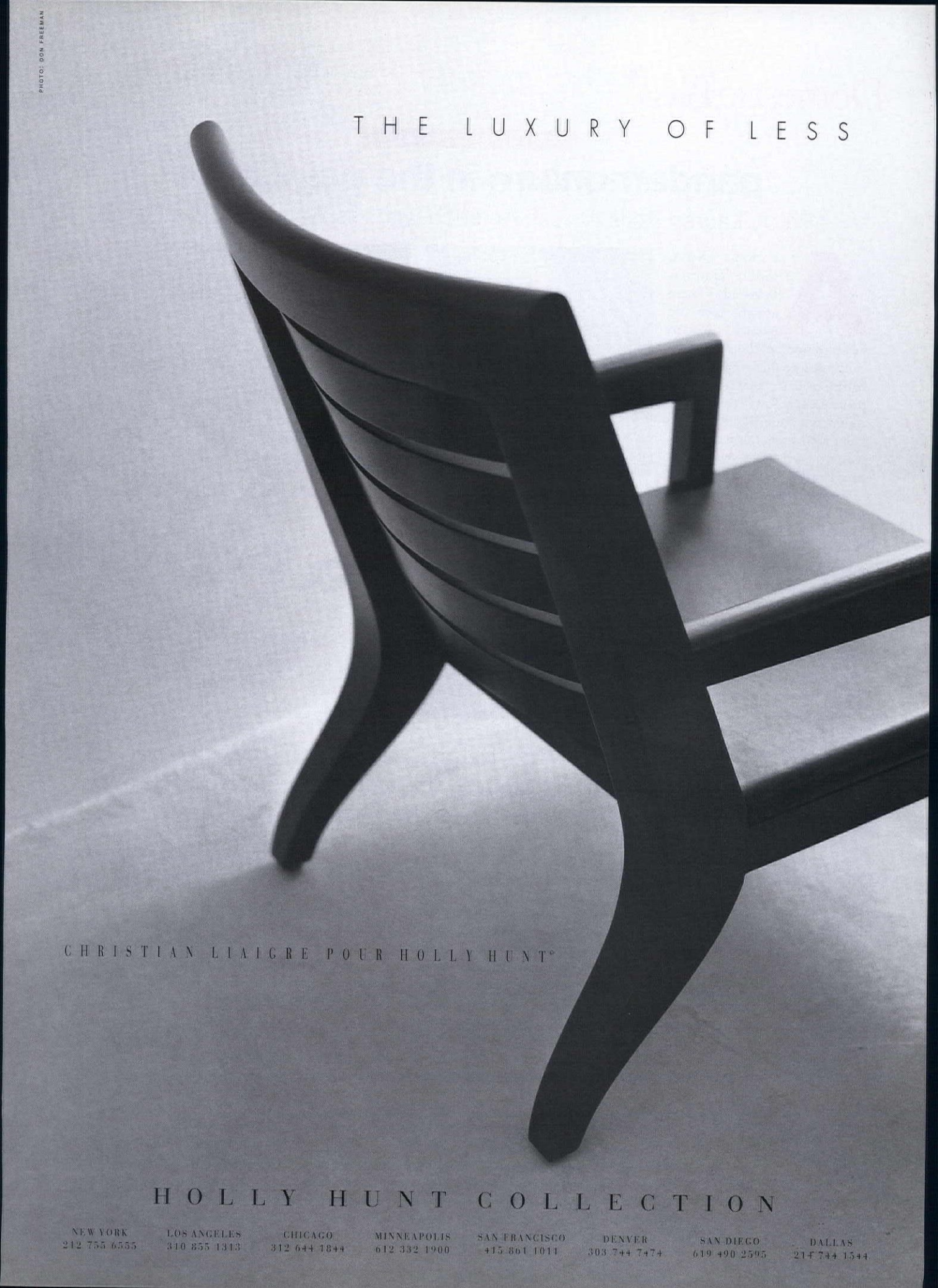


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THE BUSINESS OF BLISS

pandemonium in the paint aisle

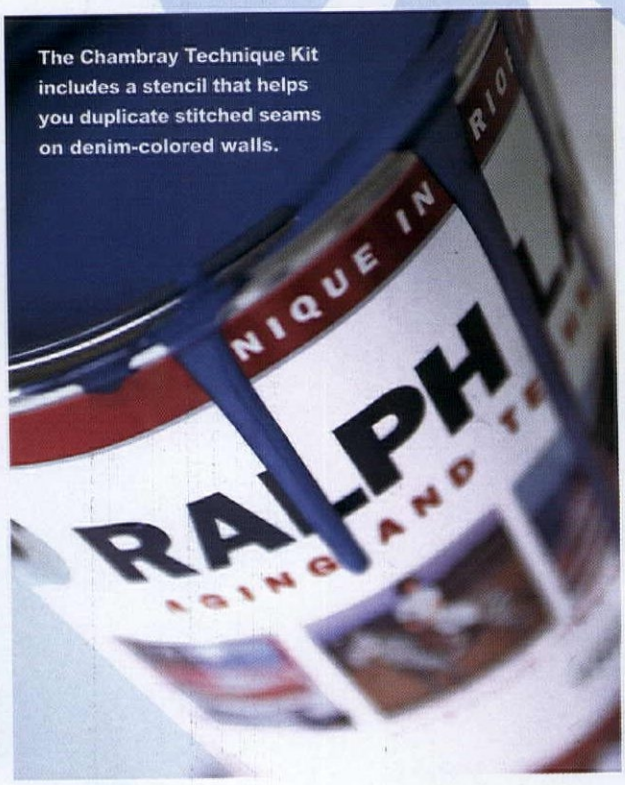
Ralph Lauren Rolls Across America with His Wallpaper in a Can

At Home Depot, they're known as Poloroids. These are the men and women, dressed head to toe in Ralph Lauren clothing, who flock to the superstore chain in pursuit of great paint. Less than two years after its introduction, Ralph Lauren paint is covering the country; by winter, more than seven hundred stores will carry the line.

Do-it-yourselfers aren't Lauren's only acolytes. For the Kips Bay Decorator Show House, New York designers Richard L. Ridge and Roderick R. Denault used a Duchess Satin in their morning room. "We couldn't have gotten the iridescent effect with anything else," says Ridge. In Omaha, Nebraska, a desperate decorator ordered twenty gallons of Denim finish from Gragg's Paint Company, in Kansas City, Kansas—160 miles away. "It's the new thing for those people who just have to try everything Ralph makes," explains Todd Gragg.







The Chambray Technique Kit includes a stencil that helps you duplicate stitched seams on denim-colored walls.

"With Ralph Lauren, you know a color won't be gaudy," explains one devoted customer. "He offers the height of good taste"

Driving this paint pandemonium is consumers' trust in the Ralph Lauren label. "The guy has impeccable taste," says Adam Janovic, of New York's Janovic/Plaza home-decorating stores. "When someone like Ralph Lauren puts his name on a color, it gives you confidence to use it."

But brand-consciousness alone does not account for the success of the line. Dispensing with the standard practice of grouping paint chips together by color—and thereby challenging a customer to pick a single paint from sixty mind-numbing shades of orange—Lauren has gathered the line's core paints into five palettes, or lifestyle collections: Thoroughbred, Safari, Country, Santa Fe, and Sport. (A sixth collection, made up of thirty-two whites, is also available.) The twenty-one colors within each lifestyle are grouped to work together—guaranteeing that Mariner Blue won't clash with Relay Red, because they are both from the Sport collection. New colors are introduced every six months.



The Chambray kit's Denim Weaver brush creates a woven pattern when used on a wet glaze.

What also distinguish the Ralph Lauren line are the remarkable Unique and Faux finishes. Once the province of decorative painters, sophisticated finishes, such as Denim and Antiqued Leather, have been packaged into individual projects—complete with paint, glaze, special brushes, and how-to videos. "There are other ways to get this kind of finish," admits Ward Wrangen, a department manager for Home Depot, "but Ralph Lauren made it easier. The paints give you an opportunity to develop your technique. They're more forgiving of beginners."

The results are truly amazing. The Chambray kit re-creates the soft and warm texture of the classic fabric right down to a cleverly stenciled stitching detail; the natural, airy weave of one of Lauren's favorite fabrics is realistically captured in the Linen kit. All of this comes at a cost ($23 to $35 a gallon), but it is one many do not mind paying. "If you look at this as wallpaper in a can," argues Pat Sherry, a Ralph Lauren paint representative, "it is really cost-effective." "People come in and are surprised by the price," says Gragg. "They are almost insulted that it isn't more money."

—LYGEIA GRACE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK RANK



ADRIENNE VITTADINI

Domestic Bliss*

Period Piece

The New Film *Ice Storm* Is a Freeze-frame of '70s Decor

For his last film, *Sense and Sensibility*, director Ang Lee immersed himself in Jane Austen's England so that every detail would be accurate. His newest film, *The Ice Storm*, is also a period piece. "I thought it would be fascinating to turn the 1970s into a costume drama," says Lee of the film based on Rick Moody's novel about families shattering during the sexual revolution. "That's when the rebelliousness of the 1960s really kicked in to the American suburbs."

The art of the 1970s—from photo-realism to the frozen moments of artists like Alex Katz and David Hockney—helped define the look of *The Ice Storm*. "There is an empty, de-focused feeling to those paintings," Lee says. "We used a lot of reflective and transparent material to get that effect."

The movie is set in New Canaan, Connecticut, a Waspy suburb that was home to American modernism: architects Philip Johnson, Marcel Breuer, and Eliot Noyes all lived in the area. The film's houses aren't mere backdrops. A Colonial-style house represents fading conservatism in an old-money neighborhood. A 1950s modern house—a jumble of patterns and period furniture—is home to the characters played by Kevin Kline and Joan Allen, who are torn between tradition and the liberalism of the day.

The film's ice queen, Sigourney Weaver, lives in a contemporary house with glass walls that is just down the street from Johnson's famous Glass House. Production designer Mark Friedberg filled Weaver's house with '70s furniture (which is, coincidentally, having a revival in the design world). Set decorator Stephanie Carroll added Age of Aquarius relics such as Massimo Vignelli's cube chairs. "The 1970s were about flamboyance, idiosyncrasy, and, to some degree, narcissism," says Friedberg. "You can call it tacky, but wait until you try to buy it. This stuff is expensive, like French antiques."

—INGRID ABRAMOVITCH



Artist Nola Lopez's interpretation of the *Ice Storm* style for *House & Garden*.

COOL CLASSICS * Who sells the *Ice Storm* look

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dingdong

Avon ladies are no longer limited to dispensing lipsticks and eye shadows. Now, when they finally get in the door, they're trying to convince people that they need new living-room curtains. Avon's home collection features matelassé pillow shams, wicker bed trays, denim comforters, and gold-leaf porcelain dinner plates. Apparently, Avon believes its customers need remedial decorating classes, because its catalogue contains a "Here's How" section that includes instructions on basics like decorating with candles, setting the table, and folding napkins.

FINDERS KEEPERS

mist have

Our editors can't stop raving about Organiclean, a spray that is said to remove wax and pesticides from fruits and vegetables. The spray targets salmonella and E. coli on cutting boards and counters and, according to one devotee, leaves dog bowls gleaming. An 8 oz. bottle costs $9.99 from 1-888-VEG-WASH.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NOLA LOPEZ; ILLUSTRATION BY CLAUDIA PEARSON

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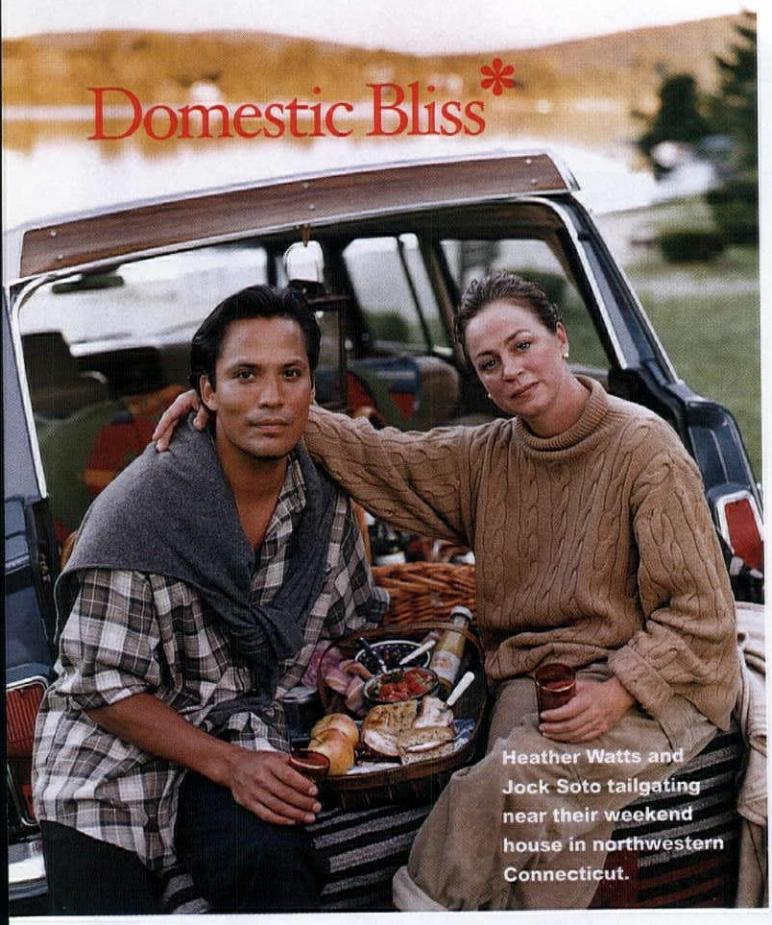
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Domestic Bliss*



Heather Watts and Jock Soto tailgating near their weekend house in northwestern Connecticut.

CHOREOGRAPHED MEALS

Two City Ballet stars write a cookbook

The idea of two weight-conscious ballet dancers writing a cookbook sounds, well, preposterous. But Jock Soto and Heather Watts—best friends and longtime partners at the New York City Ballet—love to eat. They also love to cook and give parties, which led to *Our Meals* (Riverhead Books, $24.95). A memoir with recipes, the book chronicles some unforgettable meals they've shared—from the chicken potpie they ate at the beach house of Steve Ross, the late chairman of Time Warner, to the roast salmon and avocado soup they once made in Saratoga Springs for Anne Bass, the philanthropic balletomane, during the City Ballet's summer season.

The heart of the book, and their lives, centers around the meals they make at their weekend house in rural northwestern Connecticut, which they jointly purchased in 1994. "We bought the house because of the kitchen and the driveway," says Watts; their long driveway borders a picturesque hayfield (not theirs). "It was the *size* of the kitchen we liked. While our land is beautiful, everything else about this house is ordinary."

Truth be told, their house still needs work, but that doesn't bother their Connecticut friends and neighbors, who include designer Diane Von Furstenberg, *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter, and Anne Bass. "A lot of our friends here have immaculate houses, but everybody ends up *here*," says Soto. "They like eating our food. They think our house is *fun*."

Fun and food are their priorities. Watts and Soto had been planning to renovate a bathroom they consider so hideous that they use it as a closet—until they fell in love with an old wood-paneled Jeep Grand Wagoneer. "So we put off having the bathroom," says Watts, who's already planning meals around their new car. "It's perfect for tailgate picnics."

Tout New York

New York may be the decorating capital of the world, but until now Parisians had the better resource book. David Amory Lown and Patricia Twohill Lown's *All New York: The Source Guide* (Norton, $35) rectifies the situation. Similar to its predecessor, *Tout Paris*, the book lists specialists of every sort—from restorers of ornamental metalwork (Clark & Wilkins on Park Avenue) to shops stocking vintage tassels (Collectania on Lexington Avenue). Get ready to add more than 5,000 craftspeople and dealers to your Rolodex.



DESIGN SPEAK

colorways

"Colorways" is the term insiders use to refer to the colors that printed fabrics and wallpapers are available in; for instance, Donghia's new Toujours paisley is available in eight colorways—or "colourways" if you're an Anglophile. The term's origins are elusive: the word can't be found in *Webster's*, nor in the *O.E.D.* "Who said it first?" asks Jeffrey P. Silberman, a professor of textiles at FIT. "Probably a guy with a cigar in his mouth who couldn't think of anything else to say."

pop architecture

Many books on architecture fall flat, but *The Architecture Pack* (Knopf, $50) doesn't. An adult pop-up book, it traces the history of building from tepees to Gothic cathedrals and sports stadiums. "Making the book required complex engineering," says Ron Van der Meer, a Dutch graphic designer who collaborated on the book with architect Deyan Sudjic. "We wanted to make maquettes that architects would respect and that would also appeal to the layman." His favorite section is on cathedrals and includes Gothic arches that readers pull out and assemble themselves. "That way they learn how a structure is made and that builders are as important as architects." That certainly was the case with this book, which was assembled by hand in China.



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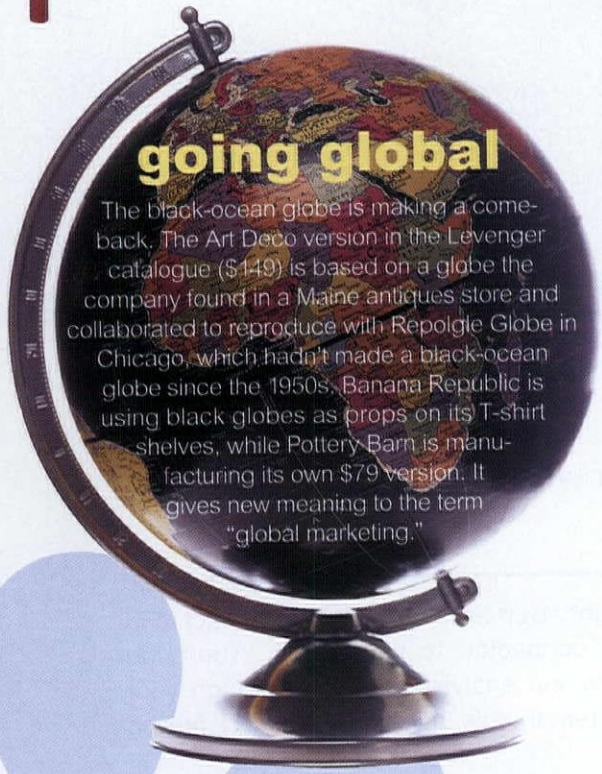
Domestic Bliss*

OBJECT OF DESIRE

miss blanche chair

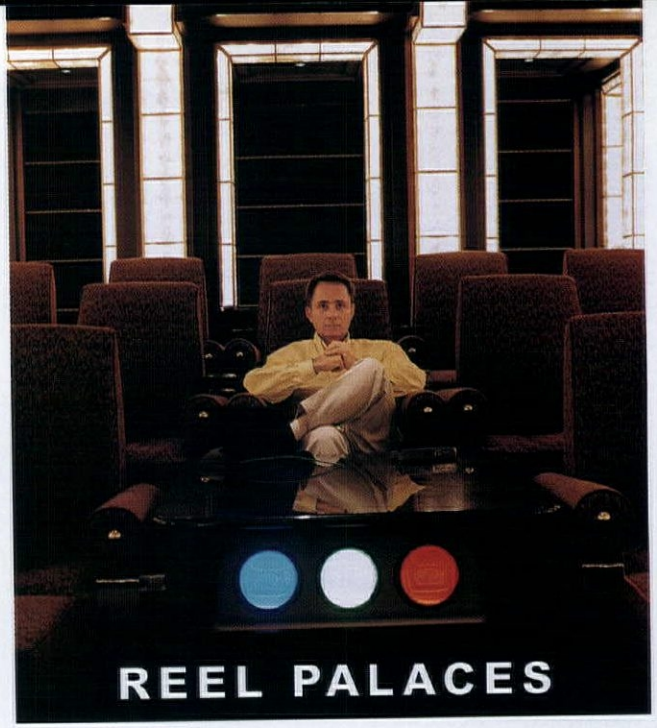


At the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's Shiro Kuramata retrospective (through December 2), the Japanese designer's 1988 Miss Blanche chair is undeniably a show-stopper. Made of acrylic embedded with artificial roses and aluminum, the chair was inspired by a corsage worn by Vivien Leigh in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. For those who fall in love with her, Miss Blanche can still be ordered from the Kuramata design office in Tokyo (81-3-5450-8243). She's not a cheap date: the chair costs two million yen, or about $17,000.



going global

The black-ocean globe is making a comeback. The Art Deco version in the Levenger catalogue ($149) is based on a globe the company found in a Maine antiques store and collaborated to reproduce with Repolgle Globe in Chicago, which hadn't made a black-ocean globe since the 1950s. Banana Republic is using black globes as props on its T-shirt shelves, while Pottery Barn is manufacturing its own $79 version. It gives new meaning to the term "global marketing."



REEL PALACES

Unwinding with the Home Theater King

Theo Kalomirakis built his first movie theater as a teenager in his native Athens in the 1970s. He got a Super 8 projector, hung a screen on the open-air terrace of his parents' home, and showed films under the stars, with the floodlit Acropolis glowing in the background. Even then he understood how there can be drama in the very act of going to the movies. "In the early days, seeing a film was an event—there was a bit of formality, you planned for it," Kalomirakis says. "What I try to do is create a perfect and magical place for experiencing movies." He's been doing that since 1988, when he founded Kalomirakis & Associates, a Manhattan-based architectural firm devoted solely to designing home movie theaters. His most notable projects are smaller versions of movie palaces—complete with marquees and grand foyers with refreshment stands—that draw on vanished monuments such as New York's Beaux Arts Paramount. Many of them have been photographed for *Theo Kalomirakis' Private Theaters* ($49.95), which Abrams is publishing this fall. While three out of four of his clients request Deco theaters, Kalomirakis advises most of them to follow the architecture of their homes so that the theater is not a "foreign object." After all, the point of theaters, he says, is "to excite, to build a sense of anticipation, and to prepare you to be seduced by the movies." True enough. Now dim the lights. —GREG CERIO

DEFINITIONS

How Americans describe their homes:

Retreat	56%
Sanctuary	45%
Rest stop	34%
Social center	32%
Pit stop	28%
Showplace	14%
Fortress	7%
Castle	6%

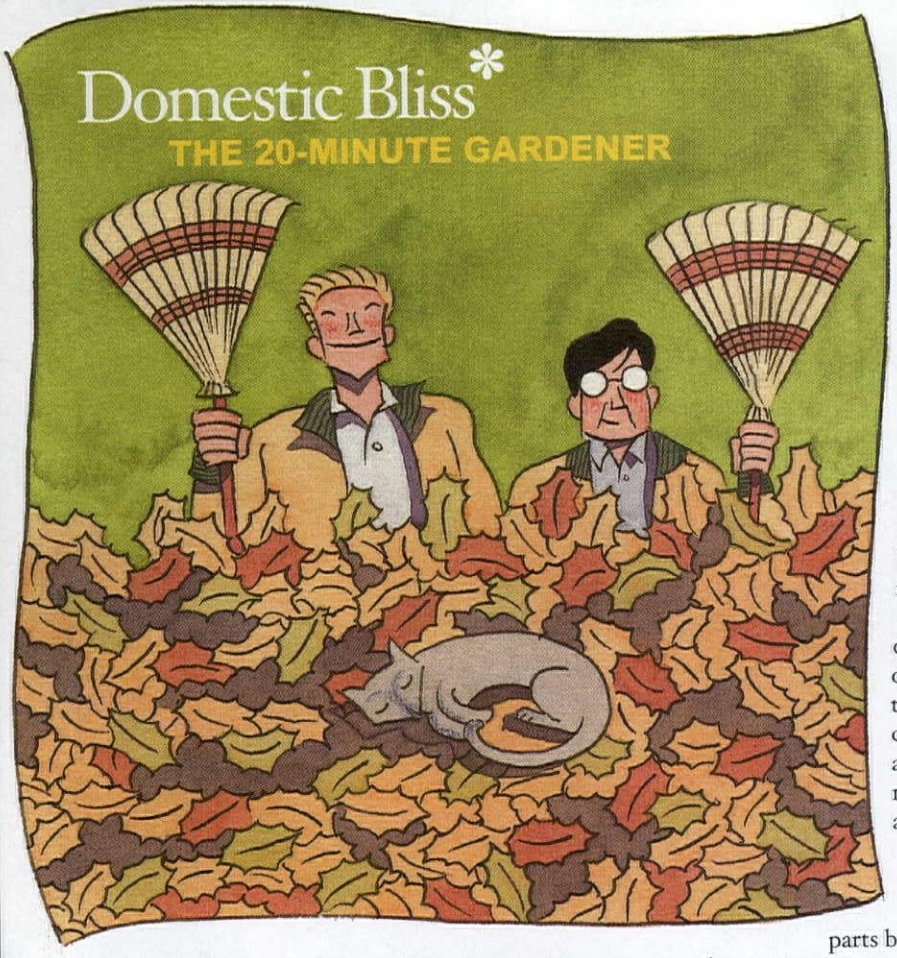
Source: BrainWaves

A Guide for Garden Snobs

James Bartholomew's *YEW & NON-YEW: Gardening for Horticultural Climbers* (Trafalgar Square, $17.95) is the *Official Preppy Handbook* for the gardening set. (The title comes from the British terms "U" and "non-U," used to define upper-class and non-upper-class behavior. Bartholomew calls the yew tree the ultimate "U" plant.) Smart and funny, it's the perfect guide for anyone who has ever felt insecure about underplantings. The book covers everything from the top Yew roses ('Comte or Comtesse d'Anywhere' and 'Souvenir d'Anything') to why Yew vegetable gardens contain no vegetables. The book is Anglo-centric, but then again, so are most garden snobs.

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PHOTOGRAPHY PETER RAUTER



falling for compost

A recipe for turning autumn leaves into a spring feast

When Marty lived in the city, he looked forward to the falling of the leaves: their crunch underfoot was one of the season's greatest pleasures. By the end of his first October in the suburbs, though, he had come to view the downward-drifting leaves as a personal insult—an outrageous act of littering that Nature perpetrated on his lawn.

Marty suggested to Tom that there ought to be some way to stop this behavior. That's when Tom—a cheapskate if there ever was one—told Marty that autumn leaves were actually the gardener's most valuable harvest. Properly composted, they could free Marty from the need to buy peat moss, fertilizer, even mulch, ever again.

Tom even shared his secret recipe for quick-and-dirty compost. This starts with an electric shredder. This marvelous tool is really just a string trimmer attached to the bottom of a funnel, and it costs less than $100 on sale at the local discount emporium. Though cheap, this tool is effective: it can reduce a Range Rover–sized pile of leaves to a couple of barrels of brown confetti in less than an hour. Some of this Tom scatters over the flower beds to compost alfresco (while also serving as mulch). The rest he dumps into the compost bin.

As Marty says, "Compost happens." You really don't need to do anything to the leaves to make them decompose. Left to themselves, though, they may take several years to rot down into the black, crumbly humus every gardener desires. Tom, who's always in a hurry, likes to goose the leaves along by mixing them with other, richer kinds of debris, such as coffee grounds, grass clippings, and potato peelings. But he knows that if he gorges the bin with too much of this rich stuff, it will start to stink. To ensure that this doesn't happen, he always adds two parts brown-and-dry (such as autumn leaves or hay) to one part green-and-juicy (and without getting too graphic, he notes that fresh manures are in this category).

When properly mixed, a bin of compost-ables really cooks—Tom actually baked a chicken in his compost heap one fall. Slow-cooking the compost-ables not only kills any weed seeds in the heap but also ensures that the compost will be ready to use by spring.

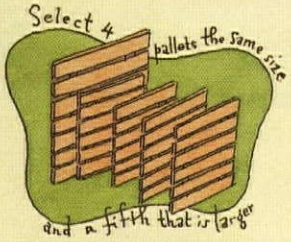
Marty has gone on to perfect an even lazier method of composting. After picking the last frostbitten tomatoes, he spreads unshredded leaves several inches deep over the vegetable garden. He sprinkles on 5-10-5 fertilizer at a rate of 5 pounds per 100 square feet. Then, with the rototiller he borrows from his neighbor, he turns the whole mess under. By spring, he's got compost in the soil and a garden ready to plant.

—TOM CHRISTOPHER AND MARTY ASHER

THE GAME PLAN



1) Any business that buys in bulk is a potential source of loading pallets: discount stores, building-supply or garden centers. Managers usually let you have pallets for a nominal fee, or, if you smile a lot, for free.



2) Tom prefers rot-resistant pallets made from red oak, but actually any pallets will do. Select four pallets of the same size, and a fifth that is somewhat larger.

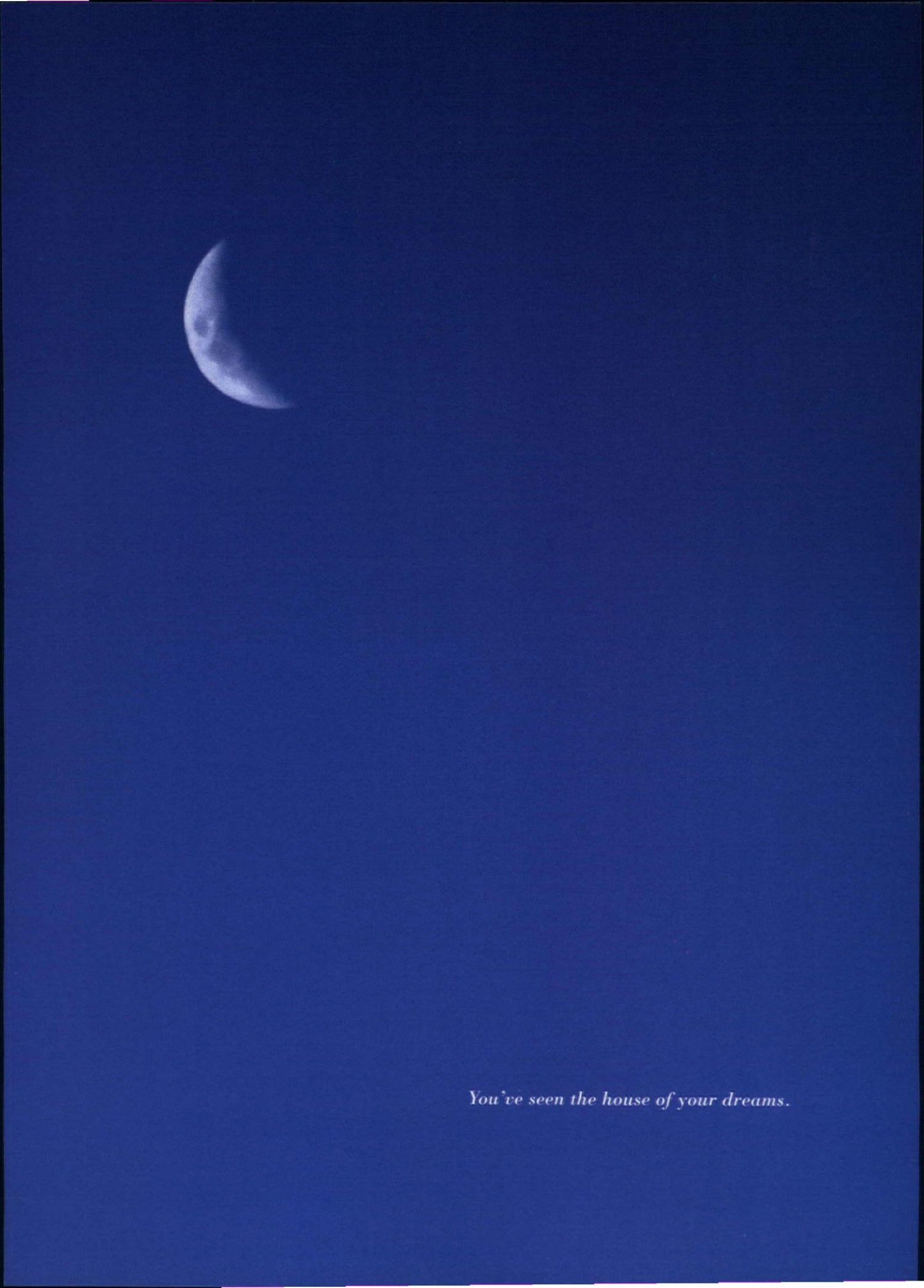


3) Put the large pallet in an inconspicuous spot at the back of your yard. On top of it, stand the other four pallets to make the bin's four walls.

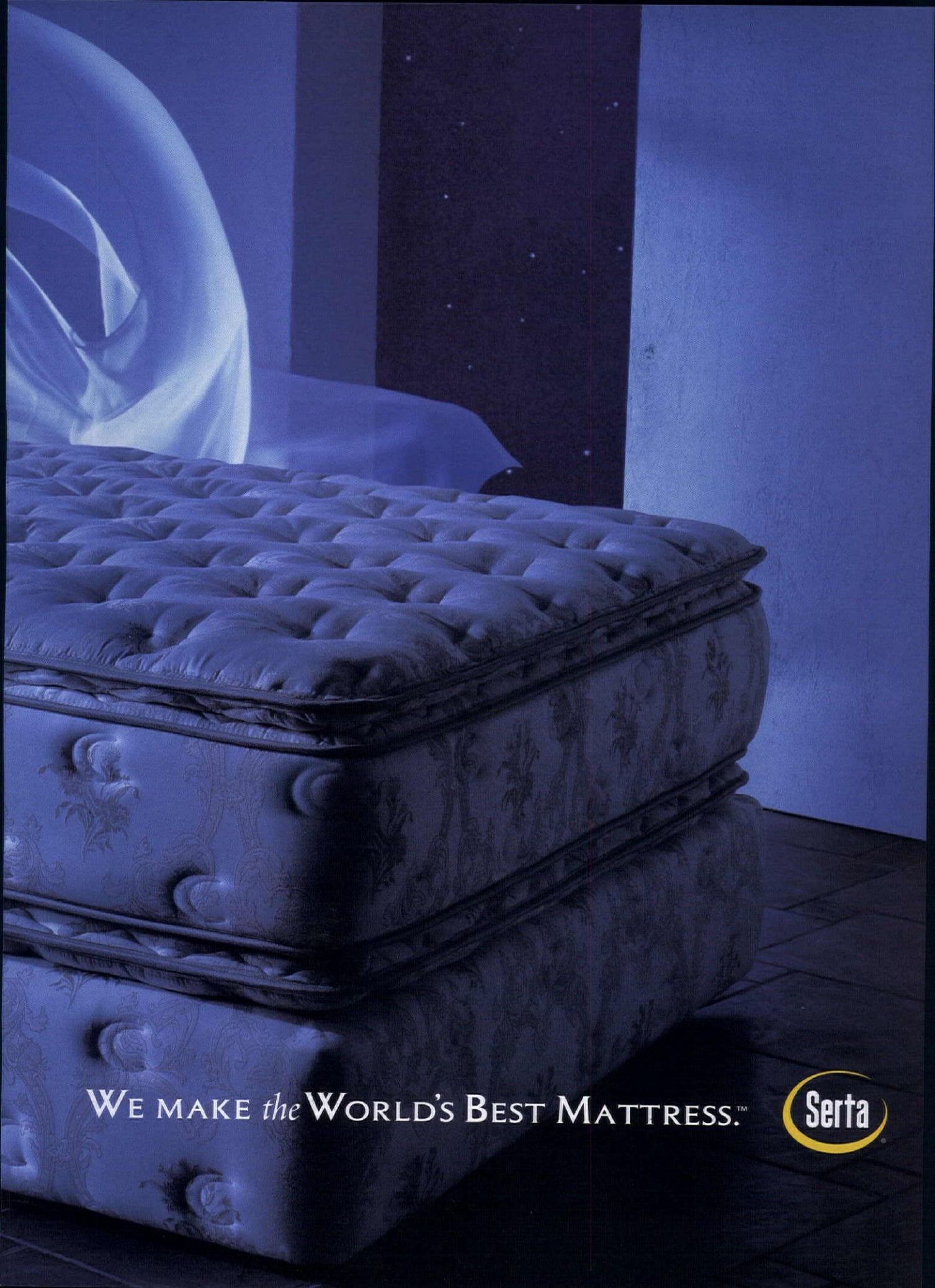


4) Tie the four walls together at their corners with lengths of stout wire; wire clothes hangers work well for this. Then load the bin. To empty it the following spring, just cut the wires.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEVEN GUARNACCIA


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Hunting & Gathering



BED DRESS Blue and white flowers mix with stripes in Halston's Contempo Floral bed linens. Queen-size bed set, about $300, from Westpoint Stevens.

bedtime stories

Fashion designers have entered our **bedrooms**, and suddenly, making our beds is more fun. Plain percale is fine, but how about a night under **layers** of **cashmere** or mohair? Add a sham or a sheer and your bed's outfit is complete. The next step: a designer **rug**. We also reflect on convex **mirrors** inspired by old-master **paintings**, and wonder which we prefer: straight lines or curves.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB HIEMSTRA

PRODUCED BY BROOKE STODDARD STYLED BY STEVEN WHITEHEAD



BEAUTY REST Ellen Tracy Home's Spring Garden sheets in 100 percent cotton are available from Fieldcrest Cannon Inc. Prices range from $50 for a standard sham to $170 for a queen-size bed skirt.



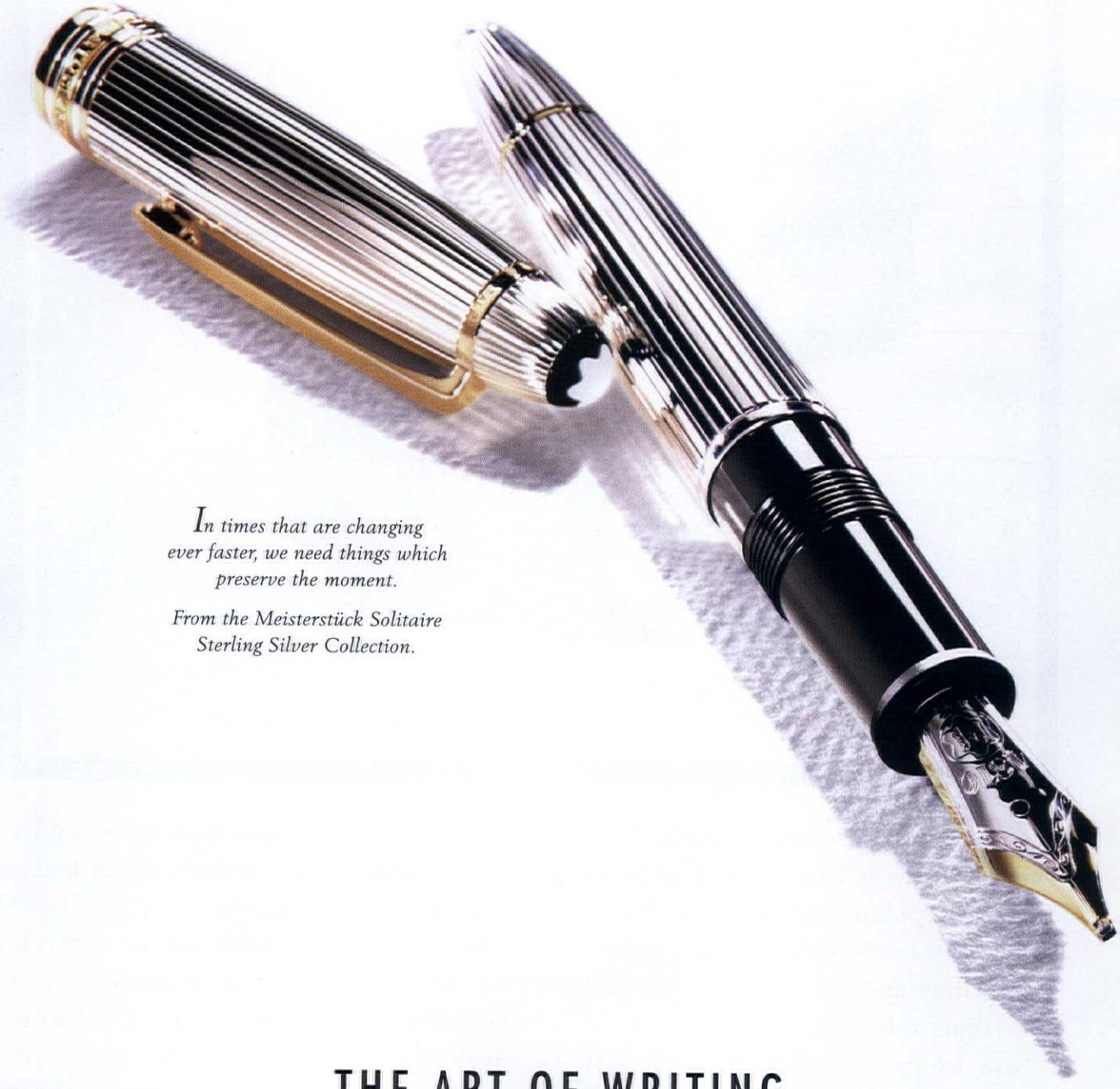
FASHION FABRICS Guess Home Collection's Mohair shams and throw, Grey Flannel bed skirt and duvet cover, and Silver Rose sheets in cotton. Prices range from pillowcases, $32 a pair, to a full-size duvet cover for $225.

"I COMPOSE A BED LIKE A SUIT," Bill Blass once said. In the 1960s, Blass was one of the first designers to take fashion boldly into the bedroom, mixing patterns and fabrics and accessorizing with decorative pillows and throws. Suddenly, the designer bedroom—once attainable only with a decorator's help—was for sale at department stores. By the 1980s, fashion's impact on the bed was as firmly made as a hospital corner, with patterns such as Dior Rose sheets, based on a dress design by Christian Dior, topping sales of most other bed linens.

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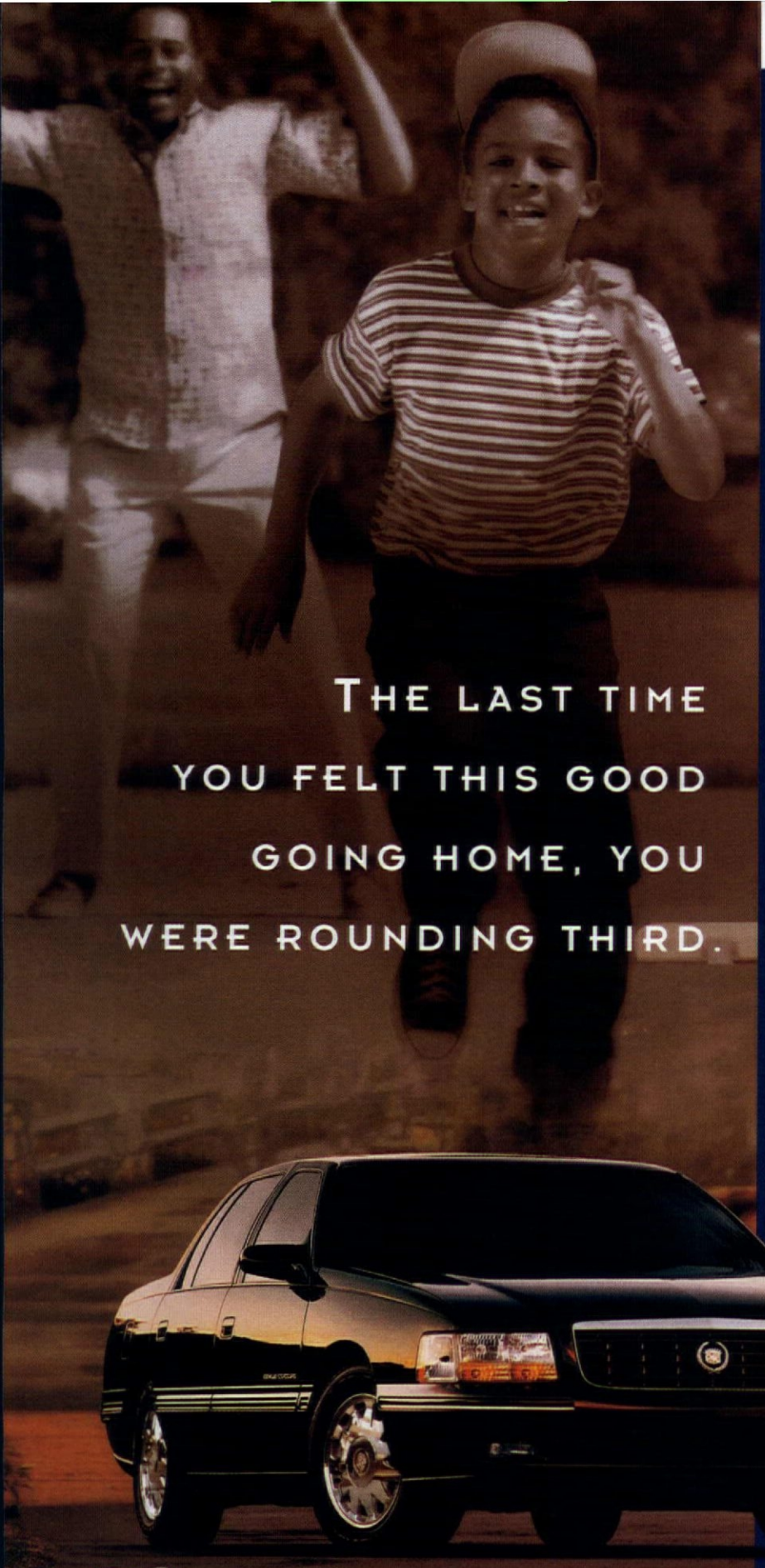
WINTER WHITE Ralph Lauren White Label Collection Beauregard sheets, $1,200 for a queen-size set, and duvet cover, $1,000. Black cashmere night spread, $1,600, and shams, $850 to $875. Sources, see back of book.

can sleep on Ralph Lauren sheets. Ditto for those who wear clothes by Calvin Klein, Banana Republic, and Nautica. The list of fashion designers with bed-linen collections is growing—and they are making us rethink something as basic as the bed.

Now we can dress our beds the way we pull together outfits. We sleep on fabrics that we're more accustomed to wearing, including cashmere, flannel, and fleece (rumor has it Calvin Klein is working on a line of sheets made of cotton underwear fabric). And we can change the look of our beds to reflect a season's mood.

Fashion is bringing not only its sensibility but also its range to the bedroom. We can now have a country bed, a formal bed, a minimalist bed, or an Adirondack bed.

While designer sheets can't guarantee sleep, they can insure a night of high style—and a more restful evening, certainly, than one on the town.



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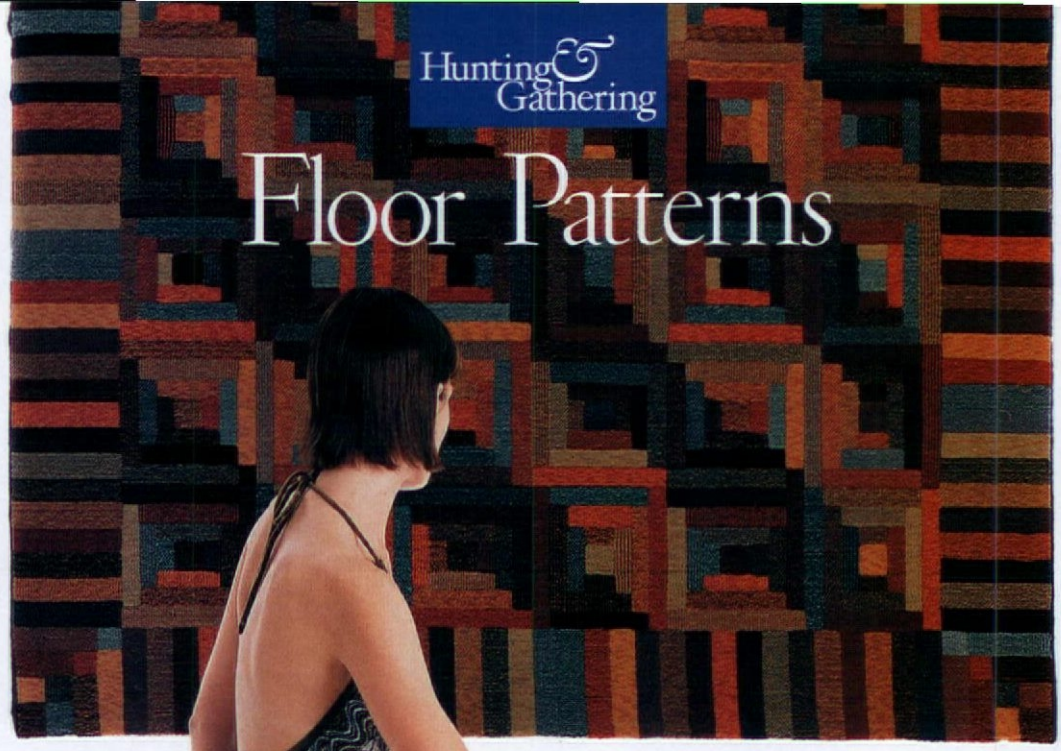
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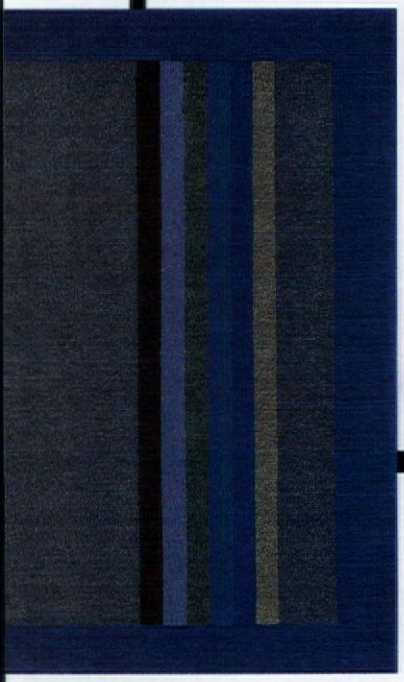
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Hunting & Gathering

Floor Patterns





CARPET DIEM
Above: Mikonos rug from the Missoni Rug Collection, $2,200, 800-647-7664.

Below: Adam Souvenir Blue rug, $6,600, from the Gianni Versace Rug Collection, 800-4-VERSACE. Far left: Sweater Stripe Rug, $599, from Alexander Julian Home Colours's Oxford Collection, available through Couristan, 800-223-6186. See Sources, back of book.



HAVING REMADE our beds, fashion's style-setters are aiming higher (or should we say lower?) with rugs. Not just any rugs, these carpets are virtually works of art. A wool rug by the Missonis is an abstraction of geometric pattern and earthy color. Alexander Julian's bold stripes recall the paintings of Brice Marden. And Gianni Versace's sumptuous designs would have pleased a Medici. With Pucci carpets from the 1960s now coveted by collectors, any one of these designer rugs would be a very comfortable—and artful—investment.

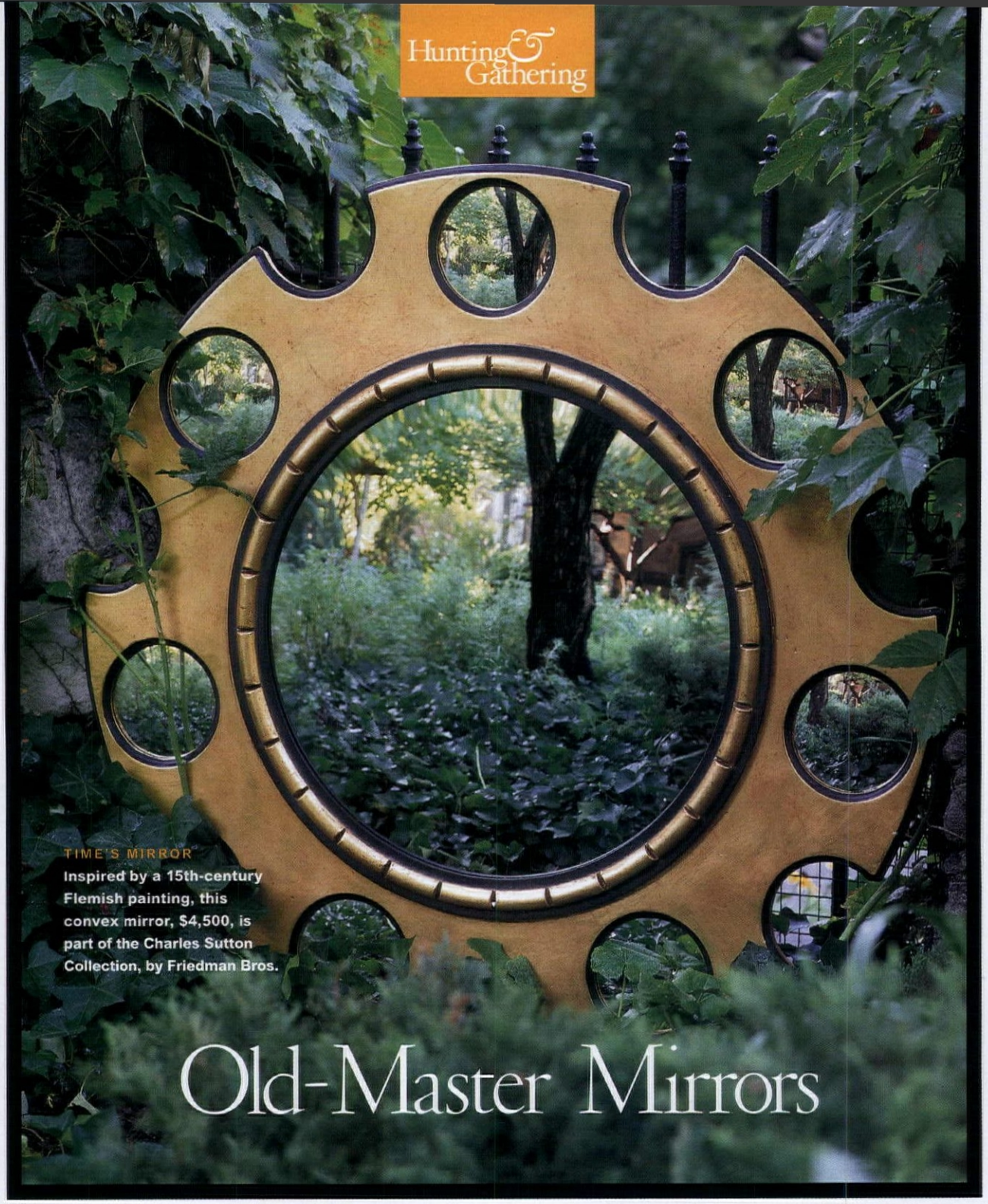
PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB HIEMSTRA; PRODUCED BY BROOKE STODDARD; MAKEUP: BATA FOR BRADLEY CURRY MANAGEMENT; HAIR: KEONI/NYC

Not the next big thing.





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TIME'S MIRROR
Inspired by a 15th-century Flemish painting, this convex mirror, $4,500, is part of the Charles Sutton Collection, by Friedman Bros.

Old-Master Mirrors

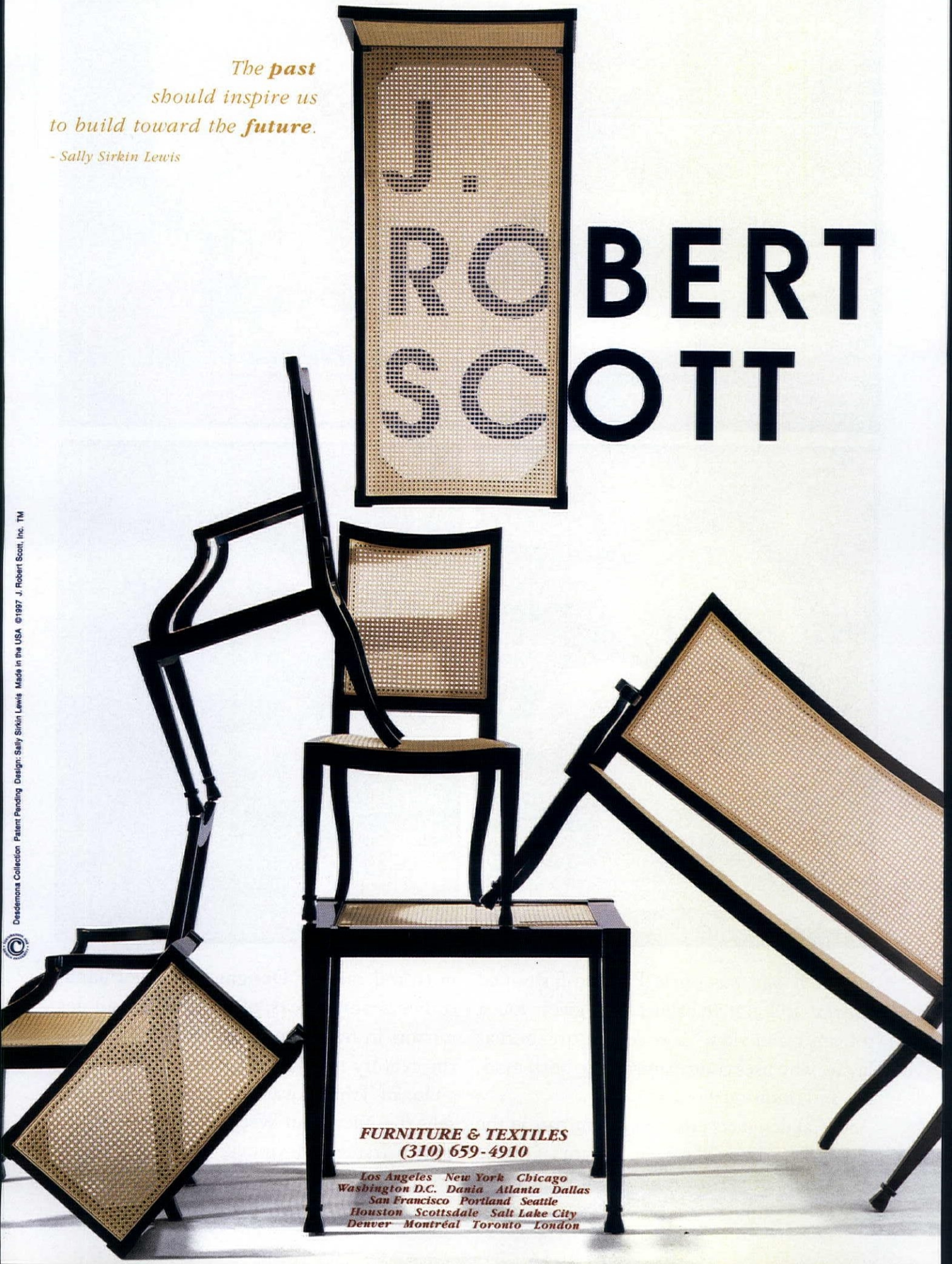
THIS MIRROR looks as though it came out of an old-master painting, and in a sense it did: furniture designer Charles Sutton created his convex mirror with an antiqued-gold frame in homage to the one in Jan van Eyck's famous wedding portrait, *The Arnolfini Marriage*. In fifteenth-century Flanders, couples like the Arnolfinis used convex-glass mirrors because they were state-of-the-art. The reflection in the curved glass was distorted, like the one you see when looking through a fishbowl, but it was a vast improvement over the polished-metal mirrors that people used until convex glass was invented. By the next century, Venetian glassmakers had developed flat-glass mirrors, and the perfect

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATTHEW BENSON. PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER

*The **past** should inspire us to build toward the **future**.*

- Sally Sirkin Lewis

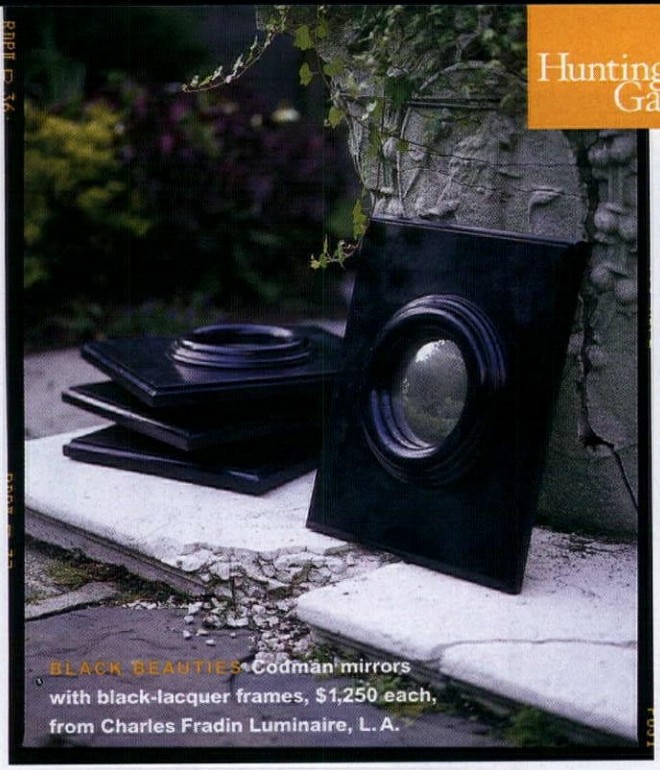
J. ROBERT SCOTT



Desdemona Collection Patent Pending Design: Sally Sirkin Lewis Made in the USA ©1997 J. Robert Scott, Inc. TM

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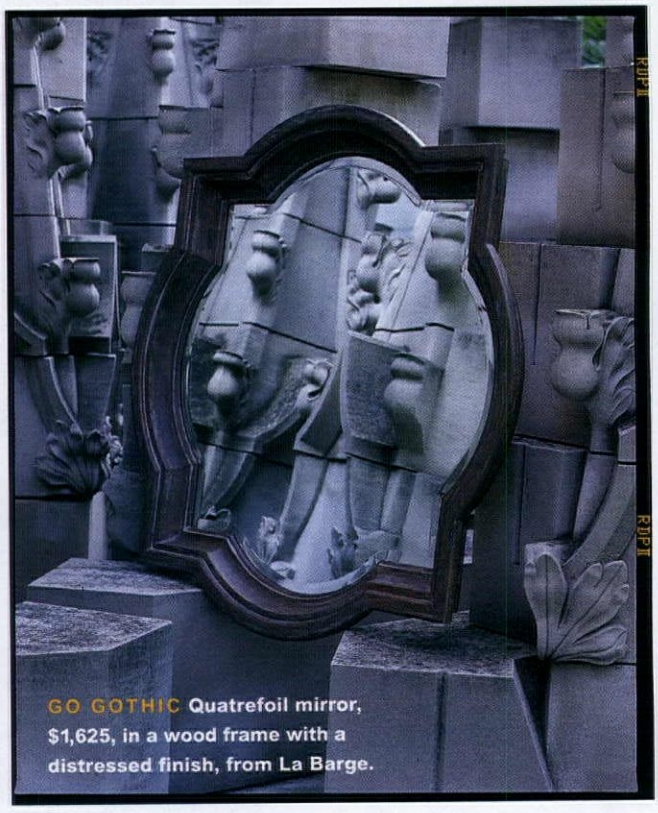
BLACK BEAUTIES Codman mirrors with black-lacquer frames, $1,250 each, from Charles Fradin Luminaire, L.A.



BULL'S-EYE Silver-on-glass sconce with blackened-metal frame, $2,500, from Maureen Fullam Studio, NYC.



REFLECTIONS Niermann Weeks mirror, left, $2,480; antique mirror at right, $1,200, both from John Rosselli International, NYC.



GO GOTHIC Quatrefoil mirror, $1,625, in a wood frame with a distressed finish, from La Barge.

mirror image was born. But old-fashioned convex still has its allure. "It gives you a romanticized view," says decorator Thomas Jayne, who uses convex mirrors in both modern and traditional interiors.

Several designers are creating mirrors in the old style. Artist Maureen Fullam's Gothic sconce features a convex mirror surrounded by mirrored radials. Designer Joe Niermann, of Niermann Weeks, places convex and flat mirrors in frames made to look like turn-of-the-century mechanical gears. Jonathan Gargiulo, of John Rosselli International, which sells the Niermann Weeks mirrors as well as others framed in vintage machinery parts, credits the idea of putting mirrors in antique



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SUN REFLECTOR
Formations's Soleil mirror, $3,712, reflects the masonry workshop at New York's Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine; at Holly Hunt Inc., New York and Chicago. Sources, see back of book.

gears to interior designer Victoria Hagan.

Charles Fradin's Codman mirrors feature convex mirrors surrounded by black-lacquer frames. They were inspired by the work of Ogden Codman, the Newport, Rhode Island, designer who collaborated with Edith Wharton at the turn of the century on the book *Decoration of Houses*. "I tried putting in a flat mirror instead of a convex one, and somehow the original intent of the piece was lost," Fradin says.

The view in convex mirrors isn't picture-perfect, and that's the point. As in an old-master painting, what's captured isn't a flawless mirror image, but one that brims with character and charm. —JOYCE BAUTISTA



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What's News

Straight lines or curves? In these designs, both look modern

1. TOTEM POLE Design buff David Shearer's new Totem Design Group showroom at 71 Franklin Street in NYC promotes the work of American and European furniture designers. 888-519-5587.

2. WHITE-HOT Available at Totem are white chairs by Thomas Sandell for Asplund, $450 each; candlesticks, $95 each, Bjorn Dahlstrom for Cbi; white-Formica-and-aluminum tables, $450-$600, by 51 Peg.

3. MIGHTY OAK The Mauretania lamp, $1,800, is made of oak with a walnut-stain finish. From FréWil, Inc., L.A. 888-FREWILS.

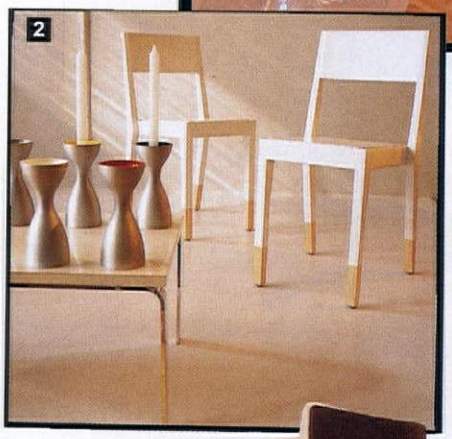
4. WARM EMBRACE The Curvy Conversation Couch, $2,800, by Juan Carlos Arcila-Duque, is covered on the outside in dark-brown llama hair and on the inside with a linen weave. From XYZ Total Home, NYC. 212-388-1942.

5. RADIO DAYS Polystyrene Poe radio, $248, by Philippe Starck for Alessi. Available at Moss, NYC. 212-226-2190.

6. BOXED IN Polis sideboard by Paolo Piva, $4,023, in Italian walnut and aluminum, from Poliform, NYC. 212-421-1220.

7. CIRCLE DANCE Turned-acrylic-and-plywood Strata vessels, $750-$1,750, from Harry Allen & Associates, NYC. 212-529-7239.







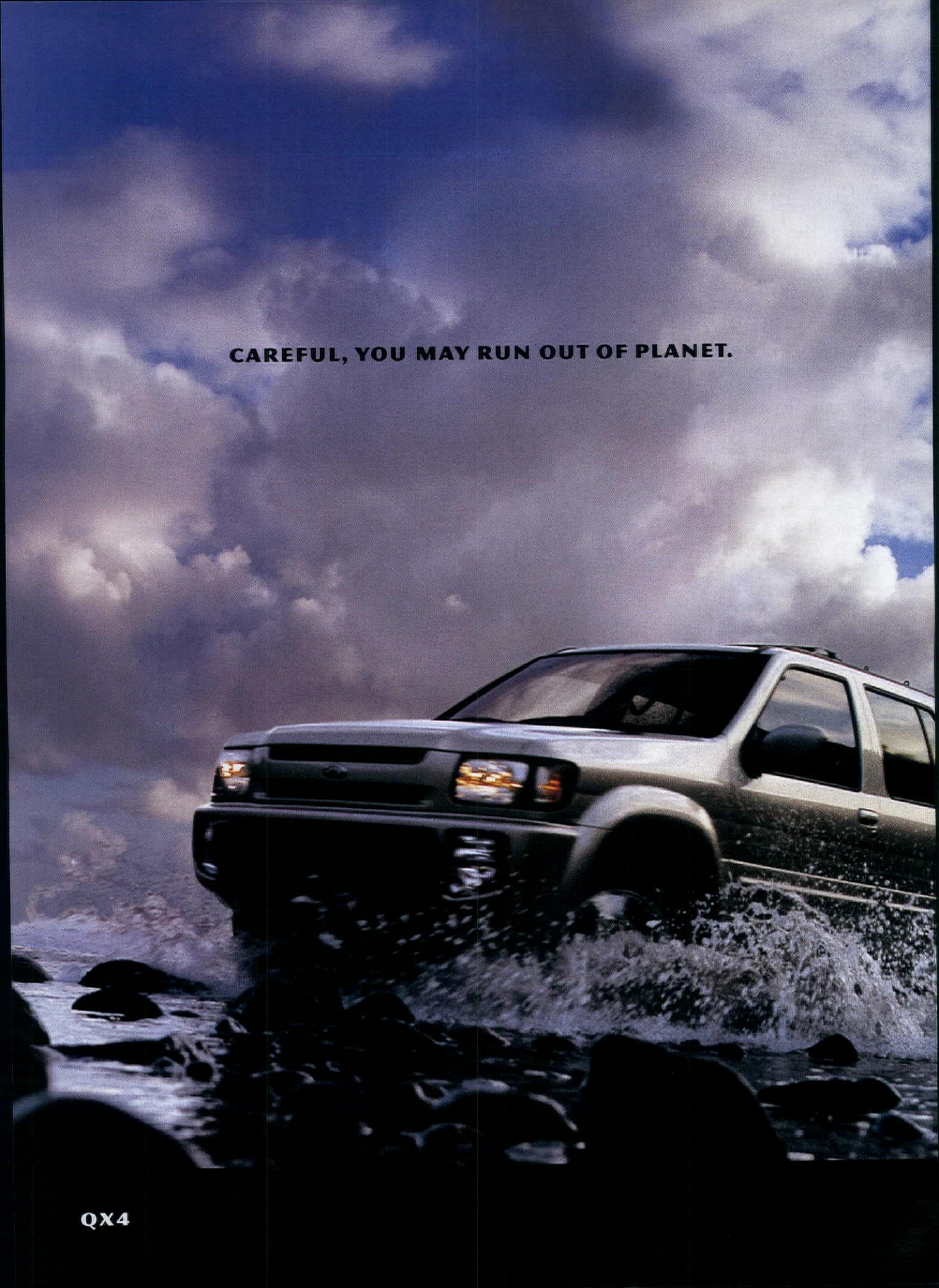








TOTEM PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURIE LAMBRECHT; PRODUCED BY BROOKE STODDARD


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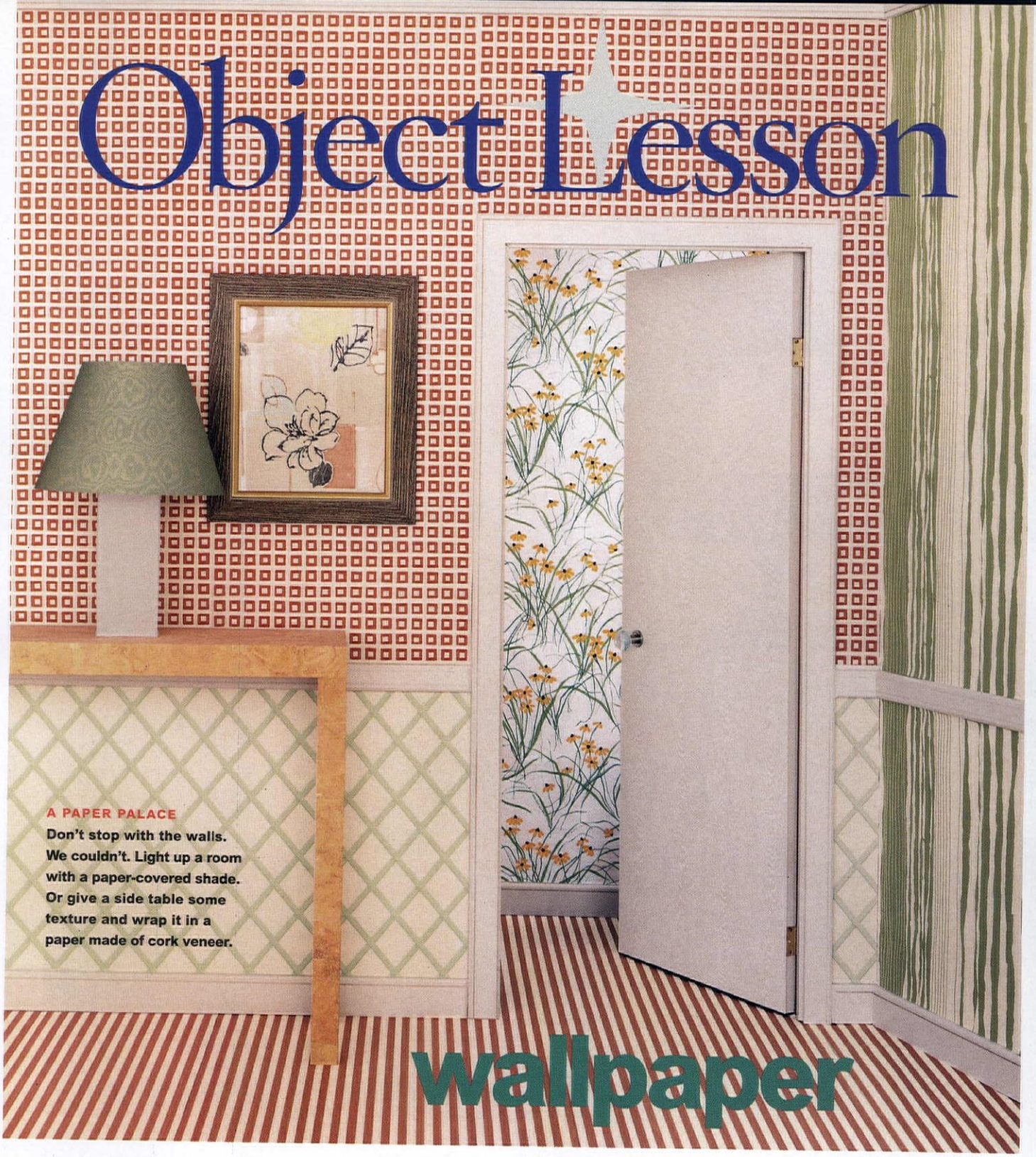
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Object Lesson



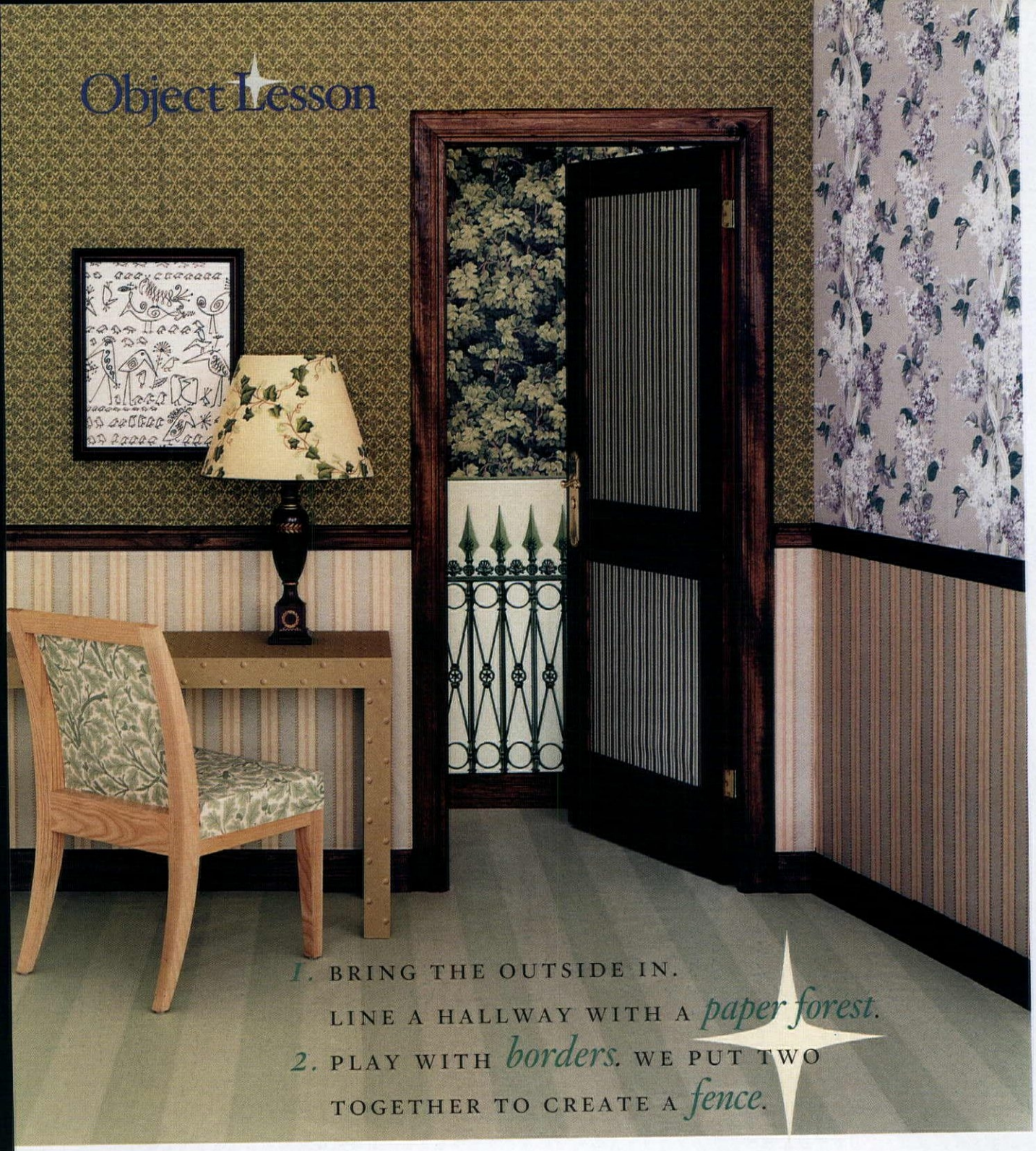
wallpaper

A PAPER PALACE
Don't stop with the walls. We couldn't. Light up a room with a paper-covered shade. Or give a side table some texture and wrap it in a paper made of cork veneer.

Long dismissed as stuffy and suburban, wallpaper is **stylish** once again. And why not? We can't think of any easier way to **change** the character, **mood**, and function of a room than with a little paper and paste. Whether you prefer cozy cottage **blooms** or cool modern **geometry**, the vibrant colors and elegant designs of contemporary wallpaper make it the **perfect** envelope for living.

WRITTEN BY LYGEIA GRACE PRODUCED BY PAUL FORTUNE
PHOTOGRAPHED BY GABRIELLA IMPERATORI-PENN

Object Lesson



1. BRING THE OUTSIDE IN. LINE A HALLWAY WITH A *paper forest.*
2. PLAY WITH *borders.* WE PUT TWO TOGETHER TO CREATE A *fence.*

RE-COVERING

When Tiziana Hardy was designing their new loft in lower Manhattan, she allowed her husband, Hugh, one decorative project: he chose wallpaper. "Even though my wife is a minimalist, I was allowed to use wallpaper in the bedroom," explains the architect famous for his renovations of the Rainbow Room and the Joyce Theater in New York City. "I think it is wonderful that you can use it to make a flat surface appear three-dimensional through the manipulation of color, texture, and scale," he says, referring to the ivy-covered walls he created. "Now we sleep in a bower."

Once perceived as a stodgy, labor-intensive, and irreversible decorating commitment, wallpaper is undergoing both a metamorphosis and a revival. Ink colors are clearer and more varied. Improved primers and adhesives make installation easier. And thanks to expanded engraving technology, paper designers have greater artistic freedom. "I'm addicted to it," confesses DeBare

TOP OF THE LINE

Beautiful but expensive, hand-blocked wallpaper is the ne plus ultra of wall coverings. Its textured finish and heavy lines—the result of ink welling along the edges of the block as it's pressed onto paper—are rarely duplicated. A process that uses two screens—one for the pattern and one for the edge—comes closest to creating the look of hand-blocked paper.

For all Sources information, see pages 84 and 86.



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Object Lesson



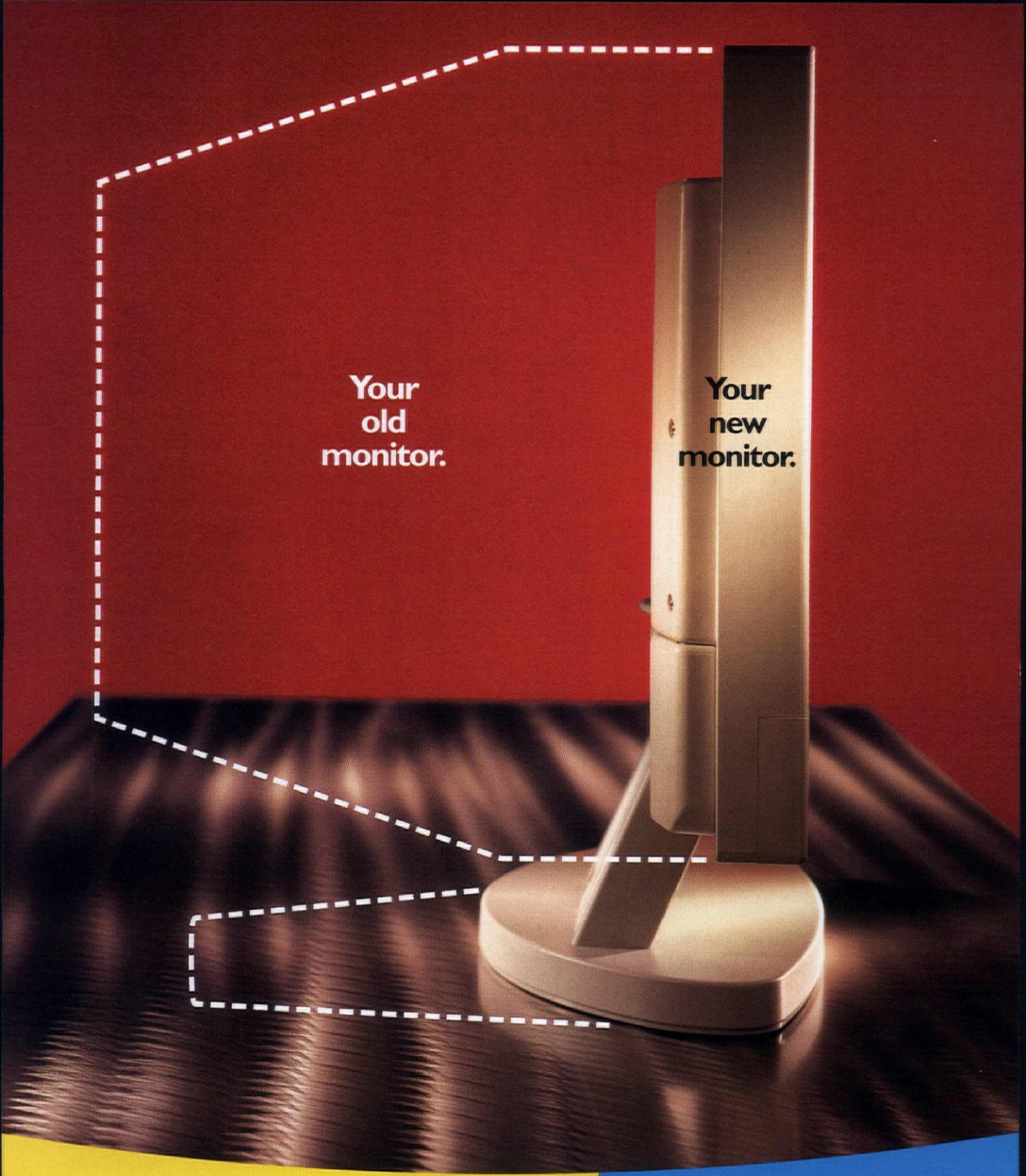
Saunders, a principal in the Connecticut decorating firm Stingray Hornsby. "Some people are frightened of it—but wallpaper can be painted over, and it comes off easily. It's a great way to redecorate."

FROM CLASS TO MASS

Wallpaper was developed in the fifteenth century as a flexible and economical substitute for the tapestries used as wall coverings in the Middle Ages. In 1481, Louis XI ordered fifty rolls of scroll-like decorated paper to bring with him as he moved from castle to castle. For those of more humble extraction, however, the covering was not available until the middle of the sixteenth century, and even then, it was made in small single sheets.

Both Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were enthusiasts of wallpaper. In 1765, Franklin wrote from London instructing his wife to "Paint the wainscot a dead white, paper the walls blue, and tack a gilt border round the cornice" of their Philadelphia parlor. The development of continuous paper rolls in the 1830s and the improved manufacturing techniques of the 1850s greatly increased production. Still, wallpaper was confined to people of means.

The 1920s were known as the golden age of wallpaper. It was used everywhere—on ceilings, inside closets, and down cellar stairs—and by everybody. Since then, wallpaper has gone in and out of fashion. Last year, the industry made $850 million,





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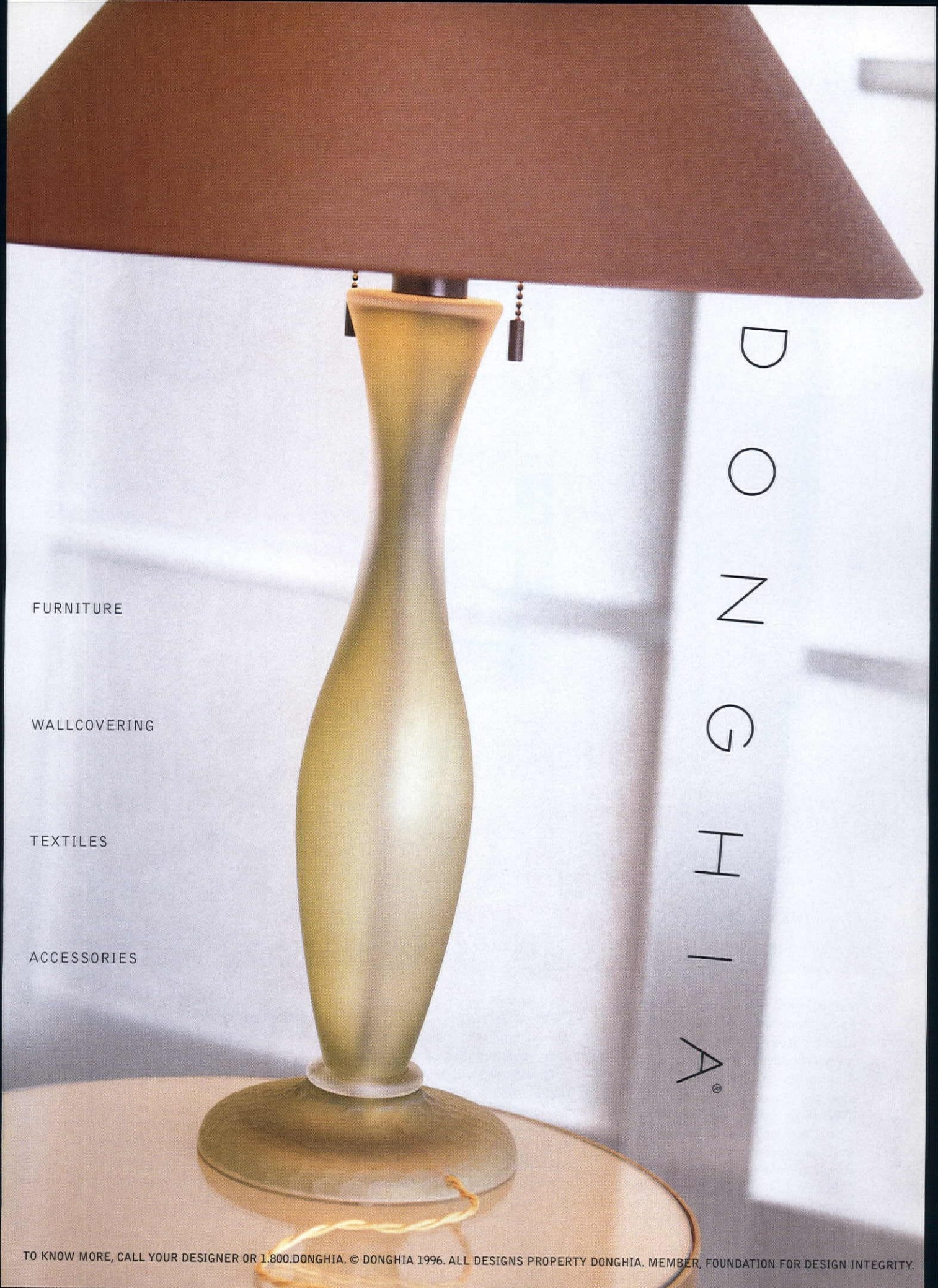
5. MIX THICK AND THIN *stripes* IN A SINGLE PALETTE.
6. USE ONLY *one pattern* ALONG THE *wainscoting* TO KEEP IT FROM BECOMING TOO BUSY.

GLOSSARY
Lee Bowman, of the Van Luit & Company showroom, suggests you get to know the following terms before you shop for wallpaper.
GROUND The material on which a design is printed. The heavier the paper or vinyl ground, the longer the wallpaper will last.
LINER A plain paper placed under wallpaper to cover the irregularities of walls. A liner also protects hand-screened papers from excess moisture and glue stains.
REPEAT The distance between the center of one pattern and the center of the next. A large repeat requires more rolls because there is so much waste when patterns are matched up.
SIZE Rolls of American wallpaper are between 27 and 30 square feet.

but much of it came from the sales of borders. "The popularity of wallpaper is cyclical, and it hasn't been used that much in the last twenty years," observes Joanne Kosuda-Warner of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. "I think that it will make a comeback."

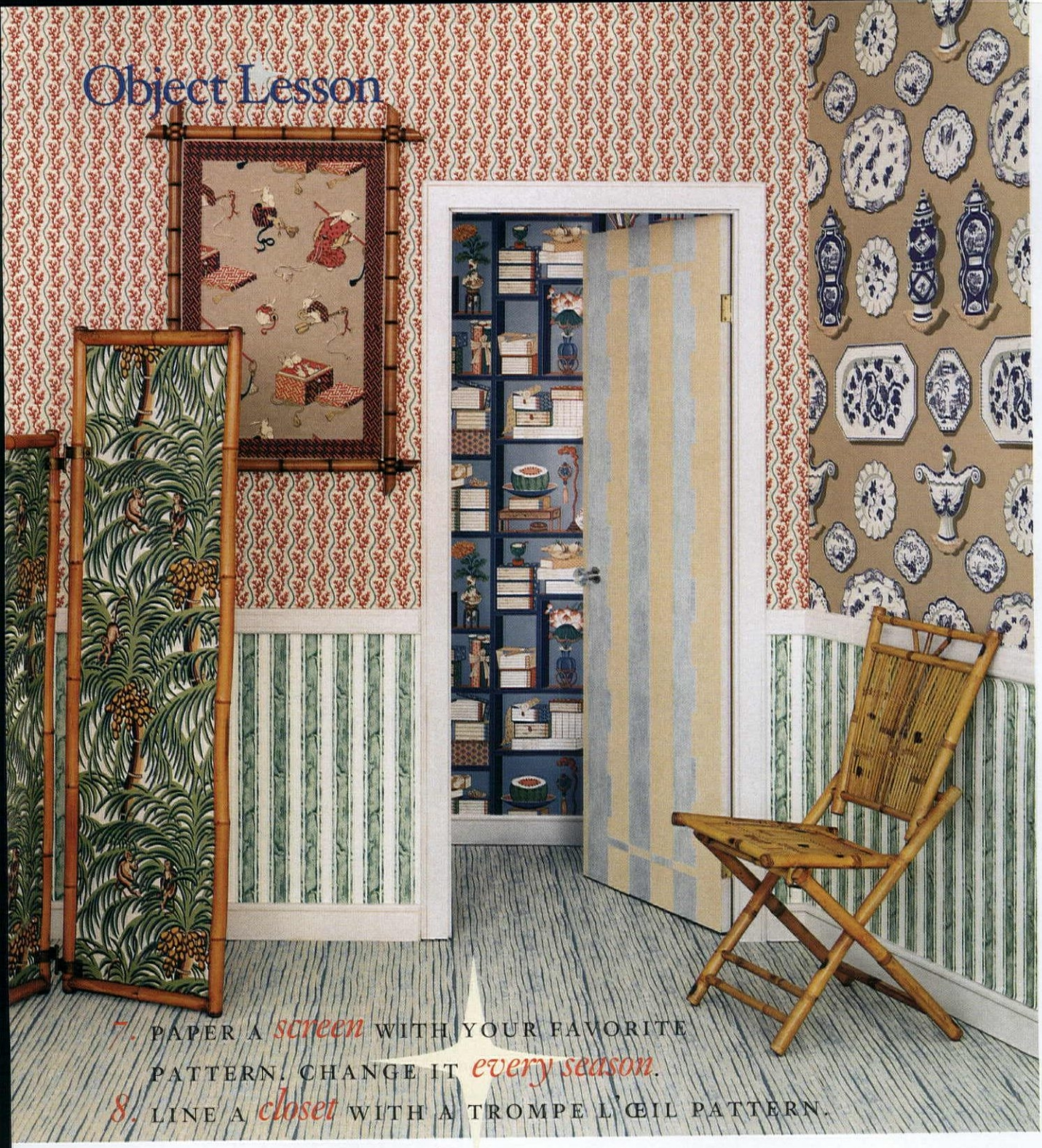
PAPER TRAIL

Part of the renewed interest in wallpaper comes from consumers eager for new wall treatments. "People are becoming more



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Object Lesson



sophisticated about their surroundings. Paint alone isn't cutting it anymore," observes Steven Kaplan, a general contractor and builder whose clients include Jed Johnson & Associates, Peter Pennoyer, and the American Design Company. "Where we would once use paint everywhere, now we might cover one wall with wallpaper and one with a textured finish. People are looking for alternatives."

For many designers, wallpaper is appealing because it adds ornament and

LET IT ROLL

When it comes to wallpaper, almost every decorator has a signature style:

To add variety to adjoining rooms without mixing wallpapers, DeBare Saunders hangs striped paper vertically in bedrooms and uses the same paper horizontally in neighboring bathrooms.

If every wall of a large room is papered, it can be overwhelming. Madeline Stuart, an interior designer in L.A., suggests placing a piece of vertical molding down the middle of a wall to give the paper a dramatic stopping point.

Sheila Bridges favors wide tone-on-tone stripes in neutral colors for clients who want to display their art collections.

For the sheen of aged leather on matte paper, Saunders applies a coat of wax or a glaze.

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So, you can see why we chose it as one of the four breeds that go into our new Lands' End® Natural Sweaters.

The others – in the snapshots next door – are Cheviot, Jacob, and Suffolk. (Take a ba-a-a, fellas.)

The fact is, each sheep has its own character. Which we've tried to capture by making each Natural Sweater from the wool of just one breed.

A credit to its parents

By "natural," we mean the wool is exactly as Mother Nature created it.

We don't bleach it or dye it. The color is the sheep's own color.

For example, our Cheviot sweater is white, because a Cheviot sheep is white. And our Jacob sweater comes in a mix of brown and white, for the same reason.

The colors are subtle. A Cheviot's white is nothing like the white of a Suffolk.

For that matter, no two Cheviot sweaters are *exactly* the same. There are minor variations, just as there are in the sheep.

(Our sheep aren't cloned, needless to say.)

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(Some manufacturers *cut* their sweaters to size – which is why their sweaters don't fit or wear like ours.)

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Photos courtesy British Wool Marketing Board.

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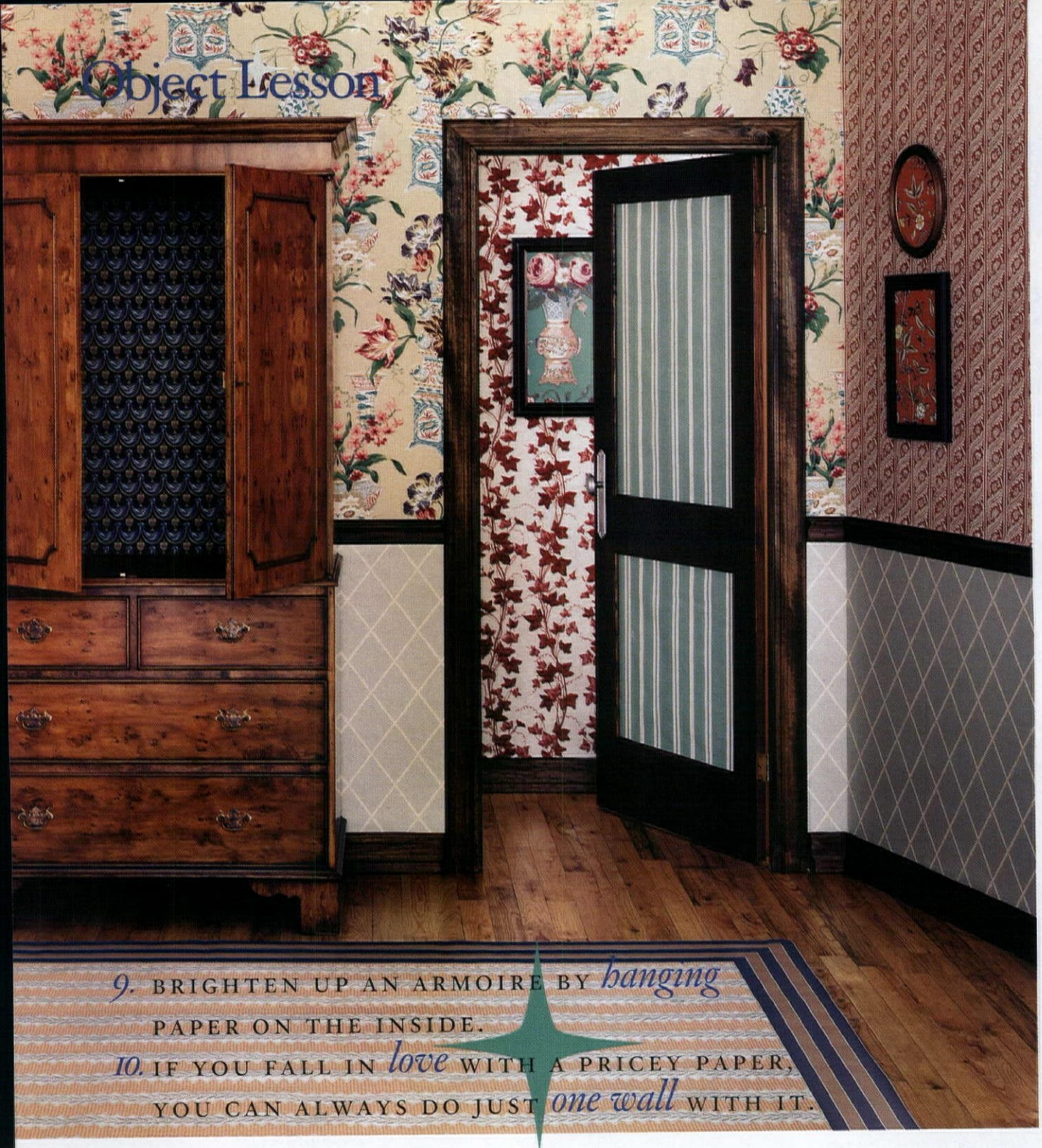
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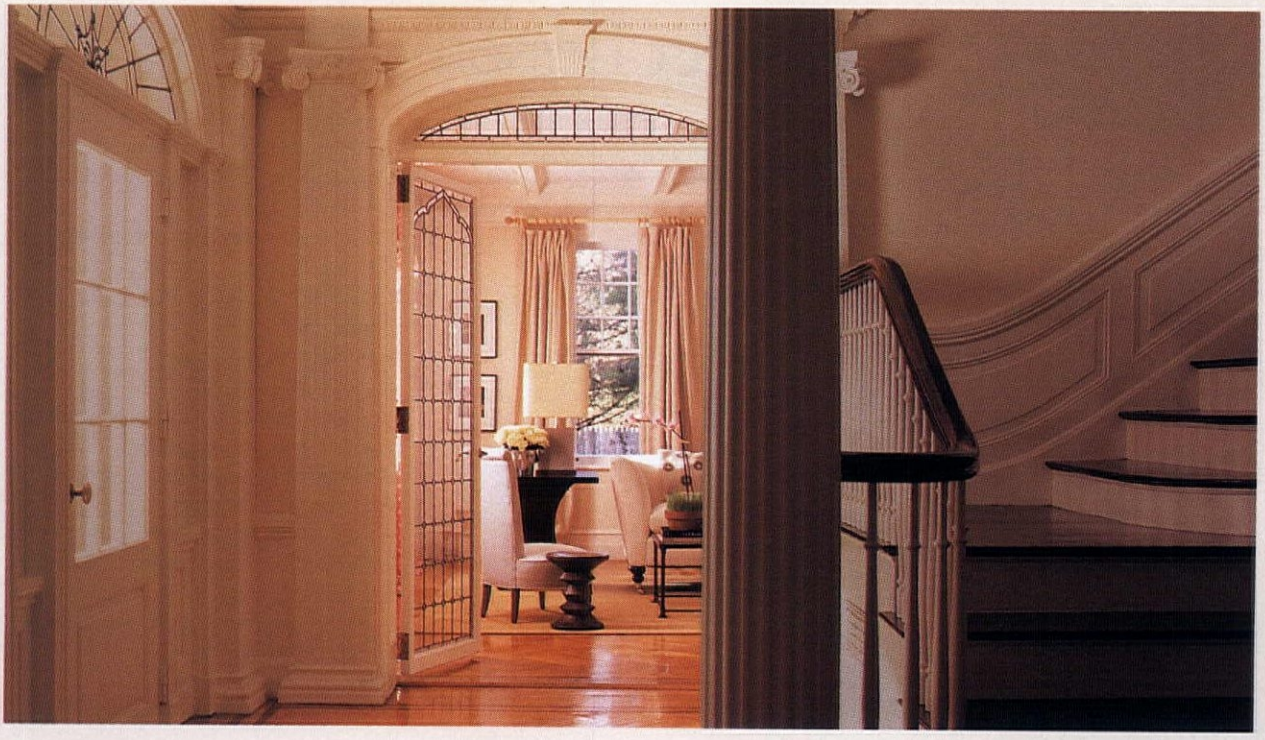
9. BRIGHTEN UP AN ARMOIRE BY *hanging* PAPER ON THE INSIDE.

10. IF YOU FALL IN *love* WITH A PRICEY PAPER, YOU CAN ALWAYS DO JUST *one wall* WITH IT.

structure to a room without the bother of new construction. "It's a great decorative solution for spaces that have little or no architectural detail," says New York interior designer Sheila Bridges, who is partial to wide stripes and tone-on-tone patterns. "I use it a lot in hallways and powder rooms. It adds depth and character to rooms that are boxy and boring. You think of a bathroom as sterile, but wallpaper can create warmth." DeBare Saunders uses cutout borders around doors and windows to open rooms to the outside. He lines niches with patterned paper to give them a "custom look." And Hugh Hardy recommends "papering a corner to create a room within a room."

A good wallpaper can also counteract the coldness of some contemporary interiors. "With clean modern furniture and monotone fabrics, wallpaper definitely gives texture to a room," says Kelly Wearstler, a Los Angeles decorator with many young clients in the film and music industry. "Wallpaper is current and up-to-date. I use lots of stripes and squares. They really enhance certain rooms. I think people are going to be using a lot of it."

The greatest transformations are sometimes effected by the simplest measures. So it is with wallpaper. "I like things that transport," declares New York decorator Charlotte Moss. "There should be fantasy in design. A wallpaper is one of those things that can transport you."



If You Think The Arch And Columns Make An Impressive Statement, You Should See The Kitchen.



The house was on the market for less than a week. They were the first to see it. He loved the Corinthian capitals, and she was taken by the leaded glass doors. The trick was to remain calm in front of the agent.

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JENN-AIR

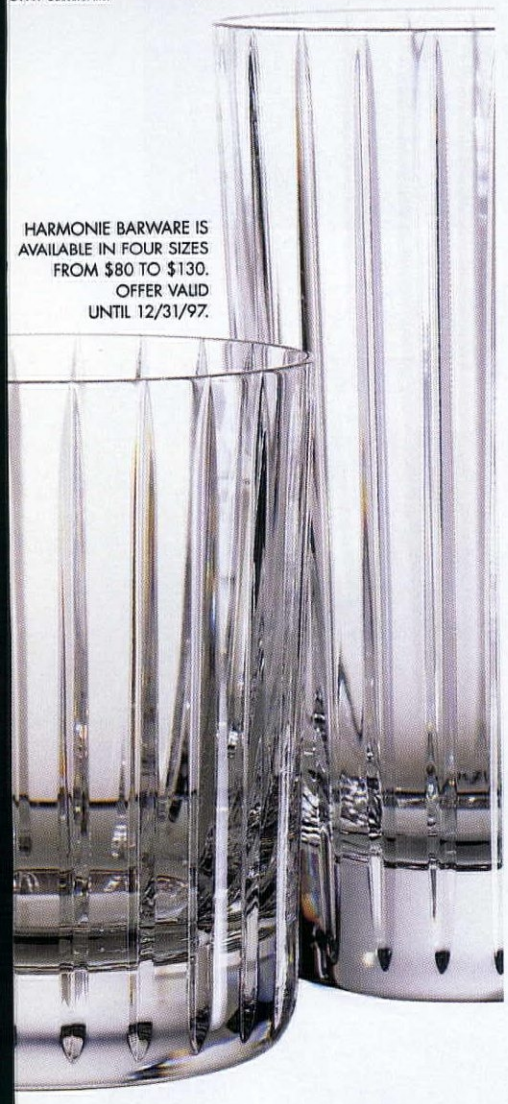
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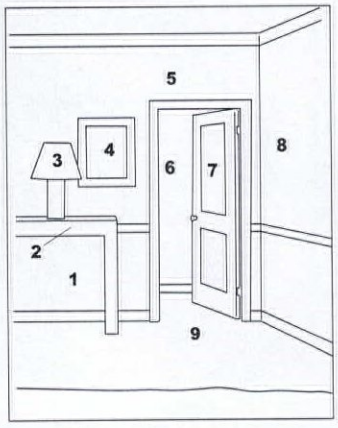
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Object Lesson

All wallpapers available through architects and designers. All frames from Larson Juhl, 800-221-4123. All doorknobs, Nanz Custom Hardware, NYC, 212-367-7000.

WALLPAPER 1

Page 73

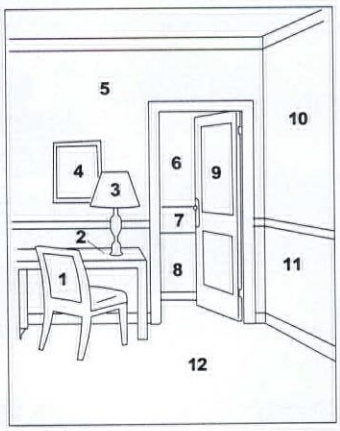


1. **Colefax Trellis,** Cowtan & Tout, 212-753-4488.
2. **Nature's Palette Cork Paper,** Boussac of France, Inc., 212-421-0534.
3. **Victorian Moire,** Clarence House, 212-752-2890.
4. **La Belle Aurore,** First Editions Wallcoverings & Fabrics, Inc., 212-355-1150.
5. **Avignon Squares,** Decorators Walk, 212-319-7100.
6. **Lisbeth,** Decorators Walk.
7. **Faux Bois on Vinyl,** Brunschwig & Fils, 212-838-7878.
8. **Mt. Kilamanjaro,** First Editions Wallcoverings & Fabrics, Inc.
9. **Candy Stripe Wallpaper,** Clarence House.

Parisian glass doorknob, No. 1020.

WALLPAPER 2

Page 74



1. **Oak Tree,** Sanderson, 201-894-8400.
2. **Roundels,** Clarence House.
3. **Le Lierre,** Grey Watkins Ltd., 212-371-2333.
4. **Aviary,** Decorators Walk.
5. **Santos,** Boussac of France, Inc.
6. **Masculine,** York Wallcoverings, 800-375-YORK.
7. **Ramee's Star & Palmette Border,** Schumacher, 800-332-3384.
8. **Ramee's Gilded Iron Work,** Schumacher.
9. **Henley Stripe,** Fonthill Ltd., 212-755-6700.
10. **Lilacs and Ribbons,** Schumacher.
11. **Cheltenham Stripe,** Fonthill Ltd.
12. **Chartwell Jaspe Grand Stripe,** Brunschwig & Fils.

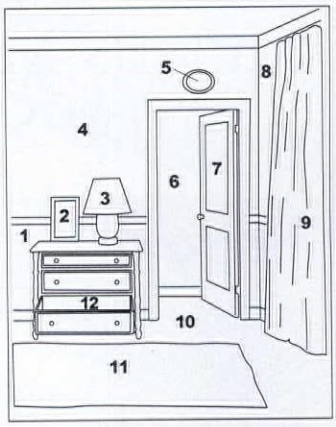
Maquis chair by Christian Liaigre, Holly Hunt New York, 212-755-6555. Available through architects and designers.

Marble-resin lamp from Spain, $595, Greene Street Antiques, Inc., NYC 10012. 212-274-1076.

Beaded lever and escutcheon, No. 2002.

WALLPAPER 3

Page 76



1. **Saltram Trellis,** Cowtan & Tout.
2. **Bowood,** Cowtan & Tout.
3. **Bristol Hall,** Van Luit & Co., 800-222-3700.
4. **Bowood,** Cowtan & Tout.
5. **Manuscript II,** York Wallcoverings.
6. **Lilactime,** Cowtan & Tout.
7. **Mansfield Stripe,** Cowtan & Tout.
8. **Clematis,** Clarence House.
9. **Sans Papillons,** Pierre Frey, 212-213-3296.
10. **Dorchester,** Clarence House.
11. **Moses Eaton,** Decorators Walk.
12. **Ribbon & Trail Trellis,** Lee Jofa, 800-4-LEE-JOFA.

Antique pine-and-bamboo chest of drawers from England, $2,895, at ABC Carpet & Home, 888 Broadway, NYC 10003. 212-473-3000.

Hand-turned solid coconut lamp from Indonesia, $658, by John Hutton, from



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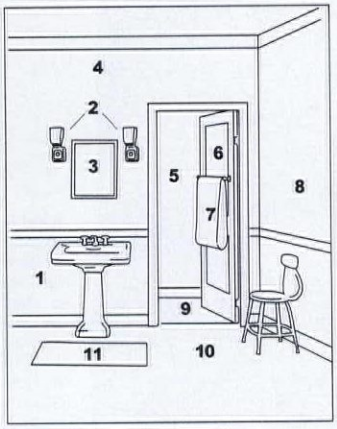
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Object Lesson

Donghia Furniture, 800-DONGHIA. Available through architects and designers. **Georgian knob,** No. 1004.

WALLPAPER 4

Page 78

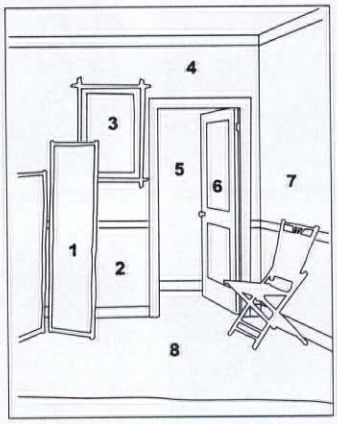


1. **Newland's Stripe,** Schumacher.
2. **Gear American Country Stripe,** Van Luit & Co.
3. **Bathtime,** Christopher Norman, 212-644-4100.
4. **Williams Stripe,** Christopher Norman.
5. **Prestwould Saloon Side Paper,** Scalamandré, 800-932-4361.
6. **Tarlton,** Willam Yeoward at Cowtan & Tout.
7. **Edgecombe Stripe,** Hinson & Company, 212-688-5538.
8. **Robbie Stripe,** Christopher Norman.
9. **Henley Stripe,** Fonthill Ltd.
10. **Chambord,** Christopher Norman.
11. **Hampton Stripe,** Cowtan & Tout.

Nickled-steel French bistro chair, $1,100, Wyeth, 152 Franklin St., NYC 10013. 212-925-5278. **Sink, fixtures, sconces, and towel bar,** Waterworks, 800-899-6757. **Parisian glass knob.**

WALLPAPER 5

Page 80



1. **Jungle Kingdom,** Schumacher.
2. **Gritti Stripe,** Grey Watkins Ltd.
3. **Shimo,** Brunschwig & Fils.
4. **Seychelles,** Clarence House.
5. **Étagère Orientale,** Brunschwig & Fils.
6. **Mirage Stripe,** Cowtan & Tout.
7. **Incurable Collector,** Clarence House.
8. **Les Bamboos,** Boussac of France, Inc.

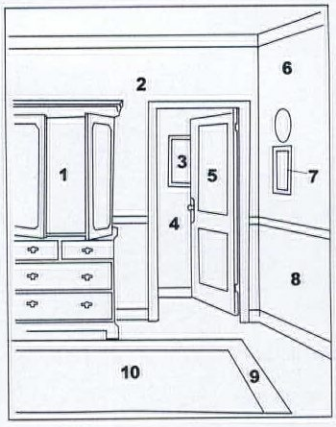
Bamboo screen, $325, and **bamboo chair,** part of a 1930s collapsible furniture set, $2,400, including two side chairs, a love seat, and a table, at ACE, 269 Elizabeth St., NYC 10012. 212-226-5123.

Bamboo mirror, $585, Paterae, 458 Broome St., NYC 10013. 212-941-0880.

Parisian glass knob.

WALLPAPER 6

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1. **Livingston,** Dufour Ltd., 212-727-0868.
2. **Kingham,** Cowtan & Tout.
3. **Mandchou,** Boussac of France, Inc.
4. **Amelia's Vine,** First Editions Wallcoverings & Fabrics, Inc.
5. **Pemberly Stripe,** Cowtan & Tout.
6. **Killarney,** Stroheim & Romann, 718-706-7000.
7. **Shanghai Gesture,** Clarence House.
8. **Pavilion Trellis,** Fonthill Ltd.
9. **Historic American Stripe,** Van Luit & Co.
10. **Tyler Hall,** Dufour Ltd.

Linen press from England, $3,995, at ABC Carpet & Home, NYC.

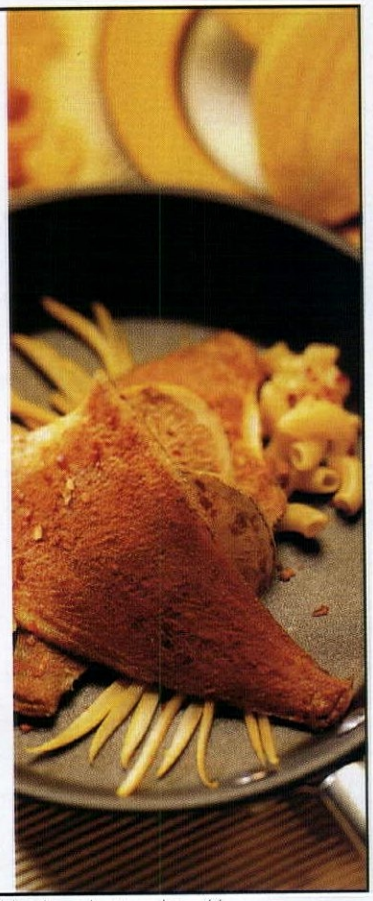
Oval knob and escutcheon in satin nickel, No. 1005.

—Produced by Goli Maleki

Production coordinator for wallpaper: Margot Nightingale

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1997

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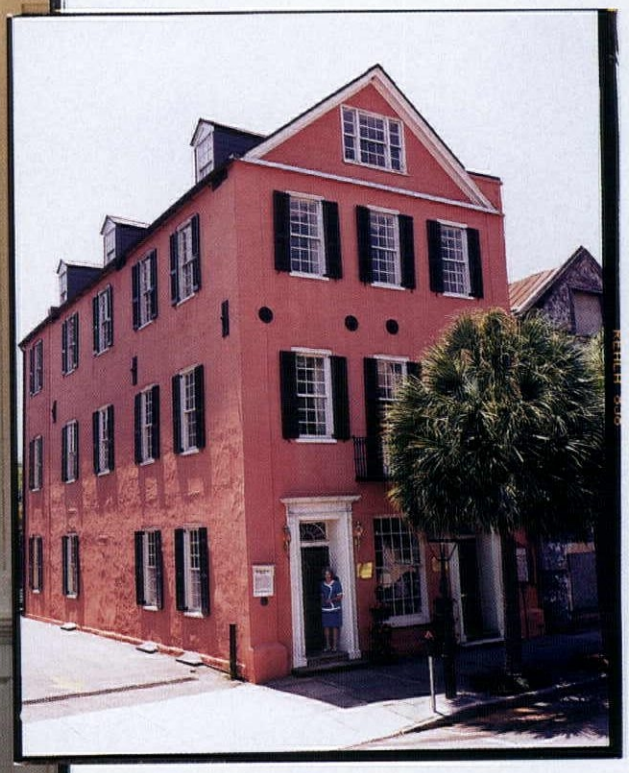
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Dear John

Visiting hurricanes, disrespectful tourists, and Yankee settlers are no match for Charleston's fearsome decorator

BY JAMES REGINATO

WHEN THE FULL fury of Hurricane Hugo slammed into town on September 22, 1989, most citizens of Charleston, South Carolina, had fled to safer ground. But as the winds howled throughout that black night, John Ragsdale remained to face the onslaught: "I sat up all night with a loaded shotgun, a bottle of gin, and the TV on until the current ran out. The house rocked with two-hundred-and-twenty-five-mile-per-hour winds."

To really appreciate the story, you have to know a few things about Ragsdale: first, she's a she. A grande dame, in fact. With her impeccable helmet of bouffant hair and serious jewelry, she was long accustomed to "receiving" in the pine-paneled drawing room of her 1770 town house, whose magnificent rococo carving is acknowledged to be the finest in town. Needless to say, most visitors were better behaved than Hugo, who finally left only after the house was nearly destroyed.

STANDARD-BEARER Ragsdale in her drawing room and in her doorway. The console is Irish, c. 1740. The black-lacquered chair is a reproduction of chairs in England's Brighton Pavilion.

Even for a classic steel magnolia like Ragsdale, the aftermath was dispiriting. "I was so depressed after Hugo," she says. "I moved to a carriage house, where I couldn't see the sky or a tree. Now, I've never been anywhere I didn't have a beautiful view. So this just about put me in my grave. Finally, my doctor came to see me. He said, 'Honey, you just have to have something beautiful to look at.' He zeroed right in on it."

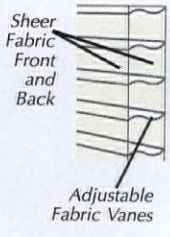
For Ragsdale, Charleston's longtime leading decorator, pleasing surroundings are a must. But in a city that cares greatly about decorum, her role goes far beyond hanging curtains and vetting Chippendale highboys. Manners and standards

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHEL ARNAUD; STYLED BY JUDYTH VAN AMRINGE

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11. *Yamaha Wave Blaster*
12. *Master's Pizza ("the works, please")*
13. *Exercise gear (mandatory for pizza lovers)*
14. *Funky old lamp*
15. *"Noodles'" dog stuff (pooper-scooper, et al.)*
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must be maintained. When necessary, Ragsdale is there to keep people in line.

AND WOE UNTO ANY tourist Ragsdale observes disrespecting her city. "One evening," she recalls, "I saw these two big, fat women in short shorts, cellulite jiggling. They were eating their suppers out of plastic-foam boxes! One of them pitched hers over by a tree. I said, 'Excuse me!'

"She didn't acknowledge me. So I went and picked it up and said, 'I think this is yours.' She said, 'Oh, no, it's not.' I said, 'Listen, I saw you. I live on this block, and it's either you put it in that trash receptacle or it's a two-hundred-dollar citizen's arrest. I'm tired of this.'

"This is the element we get!" huffs Ragsdale. But she quickly turns the conversation to Charleston's more gracious side. "Anytime it's a nice person, they're welcomed into the community," she says. "IF they respect the area."

Of course, as a decorator, it's only good business for Ragsdale to send out the welcome wagon—especially to the retired CEOs who are flocking to the area. But she smarts at the inappropriate decorating jobs she has witnessed. Take, for example, a big house recently done over by wealthy newcomers. "They had a very fancy New York decorator who went in and painted it baby blue. When I went and saw what he'd done, I thought, *What was he thinking!* It doesn't have any feel for the low country.

"Now, they're very nice people," Ragsdale continues. "Maybe one day they'll wake up and realize I know more about decorating these houses and let me get in there." But Ragsdale has also gotten her share of the new folks, most of whom are "darling," she says.

Although she is a local institution, Ragsdale is not a native Charlestonian. Born sixty miles to the north, she grew up on the family estate, Exchange Plantation. "Daddy was in the tobacco business. He was just the epitome of a southern gentleman. Mother was a character," she recounts.

Now, you're probably wondering how she got that name: "I was named after my grandmother," Ragsdale explains. "My mother's mother was named John because her father died three weeks after she was born. Her mother was so crushed—they had been childhood sweethearts. So, before the christening, she changed her daughter's name to John, to carry on the name.

"But I have told my daughter, Caroline, I don't want her to name her daughter John. It's just a pain to have to explain it in every phone call. And these people always come in my shop and say, 'We want to see John.' I say, 'You're looking at her.' It's just a nuisance! But I complained about it once to my mother and she boxed my ears in. She said, 'When you live up to the character you were named after, then you can complain.' "

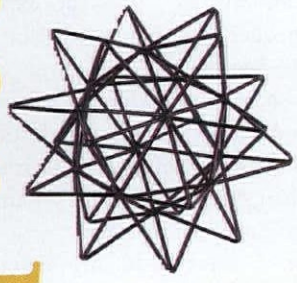


SIMPLY GRAND The yellow wing chair sports Newport Damask, and the white one, Chinese Pavillion, both Scalamandré. The tablecloths are also from Scalamandré.

Sitting today in Ragsdale's drawing room, one's eye is drawn to a large portrait that occupies pride of place. Painted years ago at Exchange, it features Ragsdale as a young matron with her daughter before her. Standing prominently behind the two is Pattie

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SKETCHES

Alston Deas. "That picture tells a pretty good story. Pattie was my nanny. I adored her. She told me whom I could date and whom I couldn't; she told me I couldn't wear shorts or pants.

"And there were certain people she wouldn't let into the house. Her father was a slave. She was with Mother for forty-five years. When Mother went to Europe one summer, Pattie wrote to her every day for three months; she was scared Mother was going to leave. She lived to be ninety-three. . . . We loved her to death."

Ragsdale relocated to Richmond, Virginia, in 1960, when she married her first husband, with whom she had her daughter, Caroline. Four years later, the couple divorced, and Ragsdale subsequently wed "my second mistake," a marriage which lasted another four years. Her career began about this time. "I was bored out of my skull because I had to sit around Richmond waiting for my divorce. I started decorating with a friend," she recalls.

An unmarried woman again, Ragsdale moved with her daughter to Charleston, where a friend put her in touch with the local decorating sources. "So I got off to a great start. I did the lobby of the Fort Sumter Hotel in twenty-two days. Then I got really lucky and started doing plantations around the area."

Another piece of good fortune came when she was able to acquire one of the city's most architecturally significant town houses, although it was by then in great disrepair. "It was built in 1770 by Peter Bocquet. He's typical of most Charleston men—they tend to marry well. He married a woman whose family had vast plantations."

Ragsdale restored the place to its eighteenth-century splendor. On the street level, she opened up a shop where she sells a variety of decorative objects. After Hugo, Ragsdale spent two and a half years restoring the house again.

Her cardinal rule of decorating: "The most important thing in a room is balance. I'm a symmetry nut," she says. "Of course, everything in the eighteenth century makes sense from the point of view of balance. I love color. I don't see



SPARKLE PLENTY The china is Regency by Royal Worcester. The silverware is Shell & Thread from Tiffany & Co. See Sources, back of book.

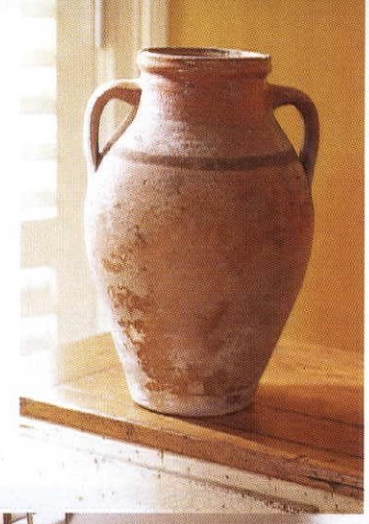
any point in having everything beige. God gave color. But I'm just kind of a seat-of-the-pants decorator. When it feels right, it's right."

Ragsdale decries numerous current decorating developments. "I'm so tired of this faux-finish stuff. Anybody who has a feather these days thinks they can marbleize," she carps. And don't ask about showcase houses or, worse, housewife-decorators. "Let these little girls with the tax number on top of the washing machine do [show houses]. . . . They're so many of [these little girls] out there. They're ruining the countryside. It burns me up."

Even as modern customs penetrate the heart of Old Charleston, John Ragsdale is one of the people who just won't budge. "I remember once, a few years ago, when Caroline was home from school for a holiday, I said, 'I need to go to the bank.' She said, 'I need to go, too.' I turned around and looked at her. She had on shorts, sandals, and a T-shirt. I said, 'You can't go in a bank looking like that. It's not acceptable. That's all there is to it.'

"I thought about it later. I sounded like Pattie. I laughed about it. Times are changing, I realized. But human nature doesn't."

James Reginato *is the features director at* W.



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Hard Stuff

Cider was once as nuanced as good wine. The elixir of our forefathers can't be bought, but it can easily be made

BY TOM CHRISTOPHER



AFTER APPLE-PICKING **The author and his niece Margarete Foster work a vintage cider press.**

WHAT THEY SELL at the local farm stand isn't really cider. It's just juice, the insipid squeezings of orchard leftovers. A century ago, Americans would not have drunk such stuff. They were used to rich and complex blends pressed from apples grown for the purpose.

You cannot buy those premium ciders today: they were made to ferment and so disappeared with Prohibition. And don't be fooled by the so-called hard ciders you may find at the liquor store. The nationally distributed products are made from generic juice sweetened with apple concentrate, and are the pomological equivalent of wine coolers.

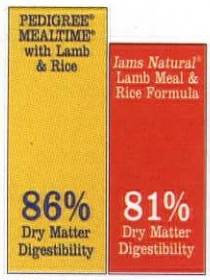
But, fortunately, a classic cider is easy to reconstruct. Only two things are essential: a crisp fall day and an appetite for adventure.

Cider won its popularity in North America by default. With the barnyard next to the well and the neighbors' outhouse upstream, the water commonly was not safe to drink. Yet traditional wine grapes didn't flourish in much of the United States, and the technology of beer-making was beyond the average farmer. Apples grew everywhere except in the Deep South, and a horse-powered cider press was easy to construct from local timber. Barrel the juice, and natural yeasts from the apples will transform it into a clear, dry, lightly alcoholic beverage that keeps for months or even years. This was cider; the nonalcoholic raw material was called "sweet" cider.

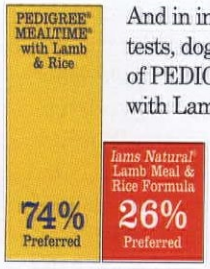
Even children started the day with a mug of hard cider. According to one historian, the average cider consumption of a Massachusetts colonist in 1767 was more than a barrel a year, and a Virginian noted in 1785 that planters each made from 1,000 to 6,000 gallons annually, "according to their rank and

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI. SOURCES, SEE BACK OF BOOK.

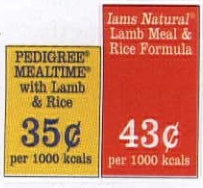
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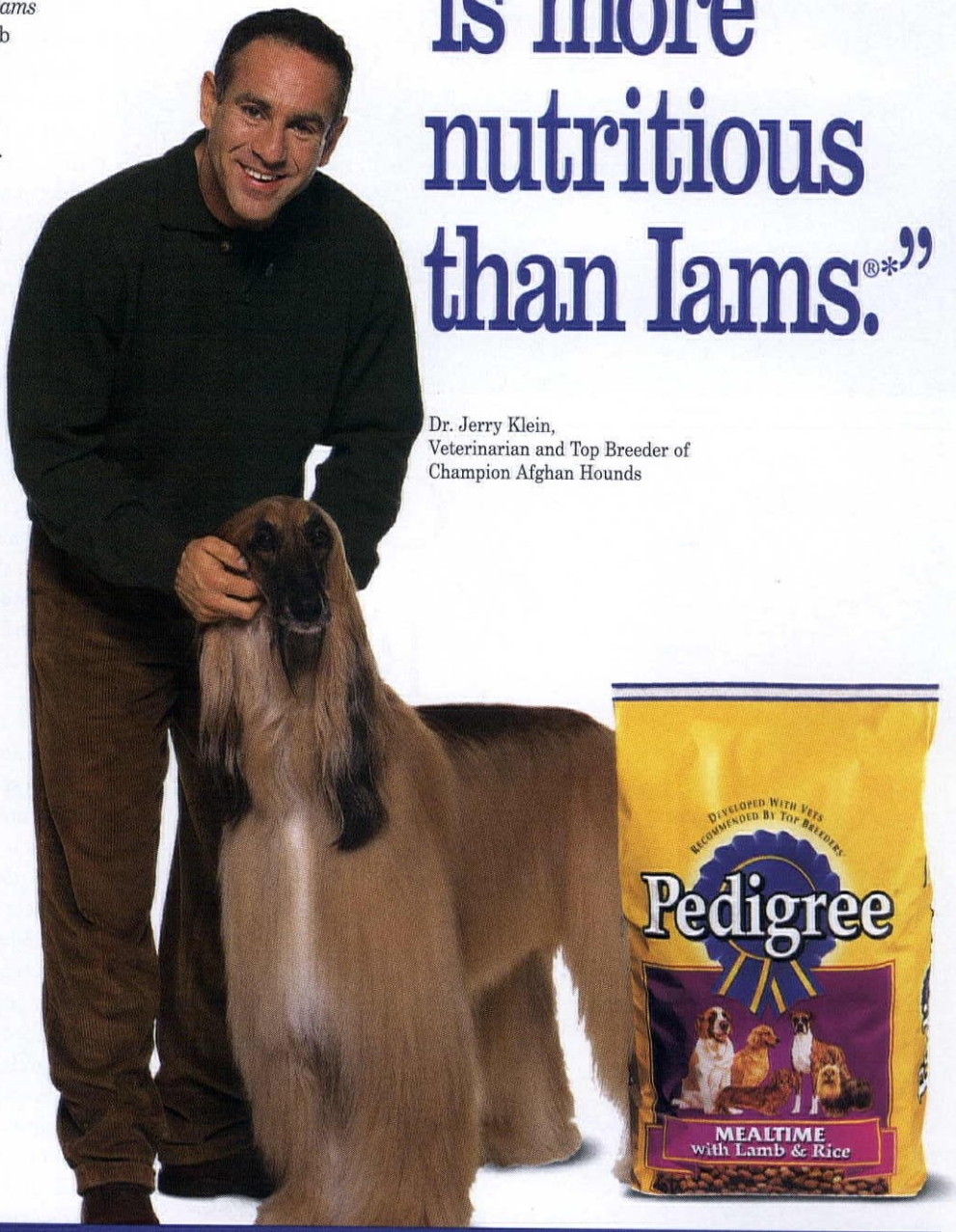
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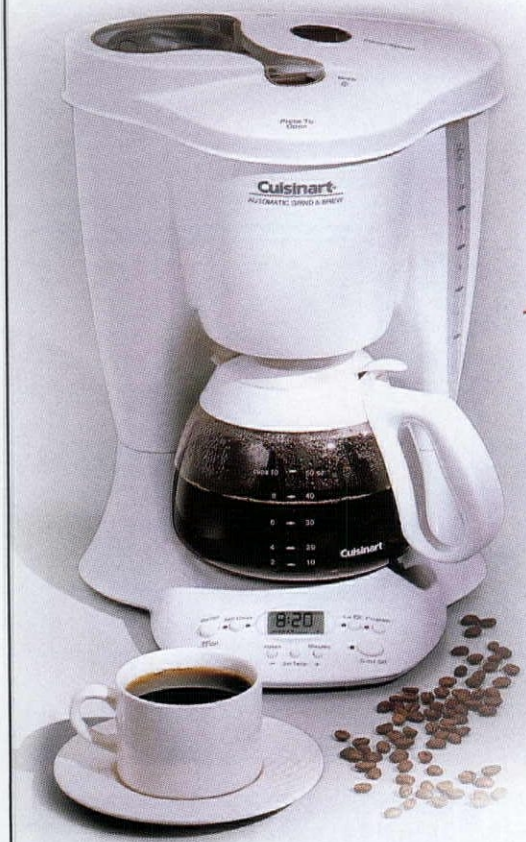


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fortune." This was a patriotic duty and a public service. "Good cider would be an actual saving of wealth," wrote eighteenth-century agrarian John Taylor, "by expelling foreign liquors; and of life, by expelling the use of ardent spirits."

Not all apples are created equal for cider-making, and trees that yielded extraordinary fruit were cherished and shared among farms. As with wine grapes, the favored variety differed from region to region. In nineteenth-century New Jersey, the 'Harrison' apple (now, sadly, lost to cultivation) reigned supreme; in eastern Massachusetts, 'Roxbury Russet' (extra-sweet, like most cider apples, but also tart) was the fruit of choice. 'Golden Pearmain' (slightly tart, rich, and aromatic) was preferred by the cider-makers of North Carolina, while 'Smith's Cider' ("sprightly" is the way the old-timers described this apple) was the variety in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Actually, it was rare to press a cider from just one variety of apple—usually, a mixture of apples was preferred, to give the cider the right balance of sugar (to convert the yeast into alcohol), tartness, and astringency. Of all the American apples, only 'Golden Russet' (aromatic, rich, and tart; so sweet it leaves the fingers sticky), the premier apple of New York state, was held to make a truly fine unblended cider.

Locating commercial sources of traditional cider apples isn't easy in this era of the 'Red Delicious.' The local Cooperative Extension office is probably the best source of leads, since it consults with area fruit growers. And when you find a source, guard it well. One orchard that promised me bushels of 'Golden Russets' later sold the whole crop to a local brew association.

You can, of course, grow your own cider apples. For advice on varieties, Tom Burford, of Burford Brothers in Monroe, Virginia, is the ultimate source—he consults on heirloom apples for historic sites around the country and has designed cider orchards for a number of private clients. Two nurseries with outstanding selections of antique apple trees are Southmeadow Fruit Gardens in Baroda, Michigan, and Sonoma Antique Apple

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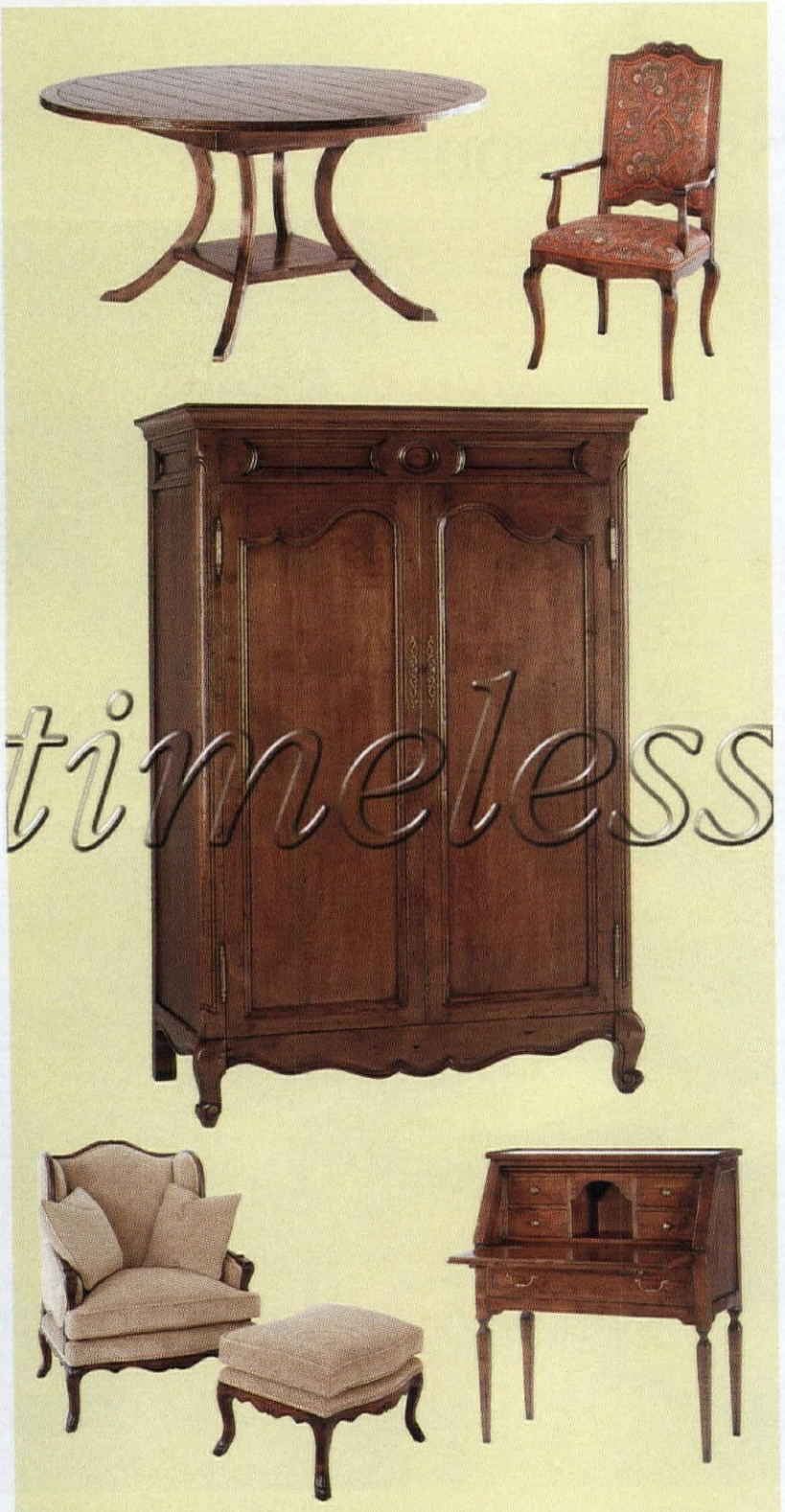
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DIG IT

Nursery in Healdsburg, California. For those without the space or patience to grow their apples, there is an alternative: scavenge. For it is one of the strange truths of gardening that while many plant apple trees, few make full use of the fruit. In fact, you will be regarded as a benefactor if you offer to clear away the ripened apples before they drop to the lawn.

Often, you won't know the names of the fruits you harvest, but that doesn't matter if you let your tongue be your guide. Sweet fruits should make up half of your blend. 'McIntosh,' the most common backyard planting of all, is an excellent sweet, and its juice has a perfume that adds a special bouquet.

The remainder of your blend should consist of equal parts tart apples such as 'Rhode Island Greening'; aromatic apples with good noses such as 'Gravenstein' and 'Winter Banana,' (if you haven't already included 'McIntosh'); and mouth-puckering, astringent apples—crab apples or the hard green fruits you'll find growing at the edges of neglected fields.

Connoisseurs may insist on pressing their own, but the easiest way to turn fruit into cider is to pay the nominal fee that the local orchard charges for a custom pressing. Figure that each bushel of fruit will yield about three gallons—and savor the result, for each pressing will be irreproducible, its flavor shaped not only by the choice of fruits but also by the soil in which they grew and the weather of that particular year.

That's why you should be sure to make enough to set five or ten gallons aside to ferment.

The techniques involved in this transformation are simple, and you'll find both equipment and advice at the nearest beer-and wine-making supply store. The "Real Cider and Perry Page" Web site (sun./.bham.ac.uk/GraftonG/cider) is also a good source of recipes and technical assistance.

Sweet and sour with a tannic bite, freshly pressed cider is the flavor of this season. Served chilled and sparkling from the bottle, its fermented offspring provides an authentically American savor that few enjoy today. How lucky it is that with cider, resurrection comes so easily.



Get Even

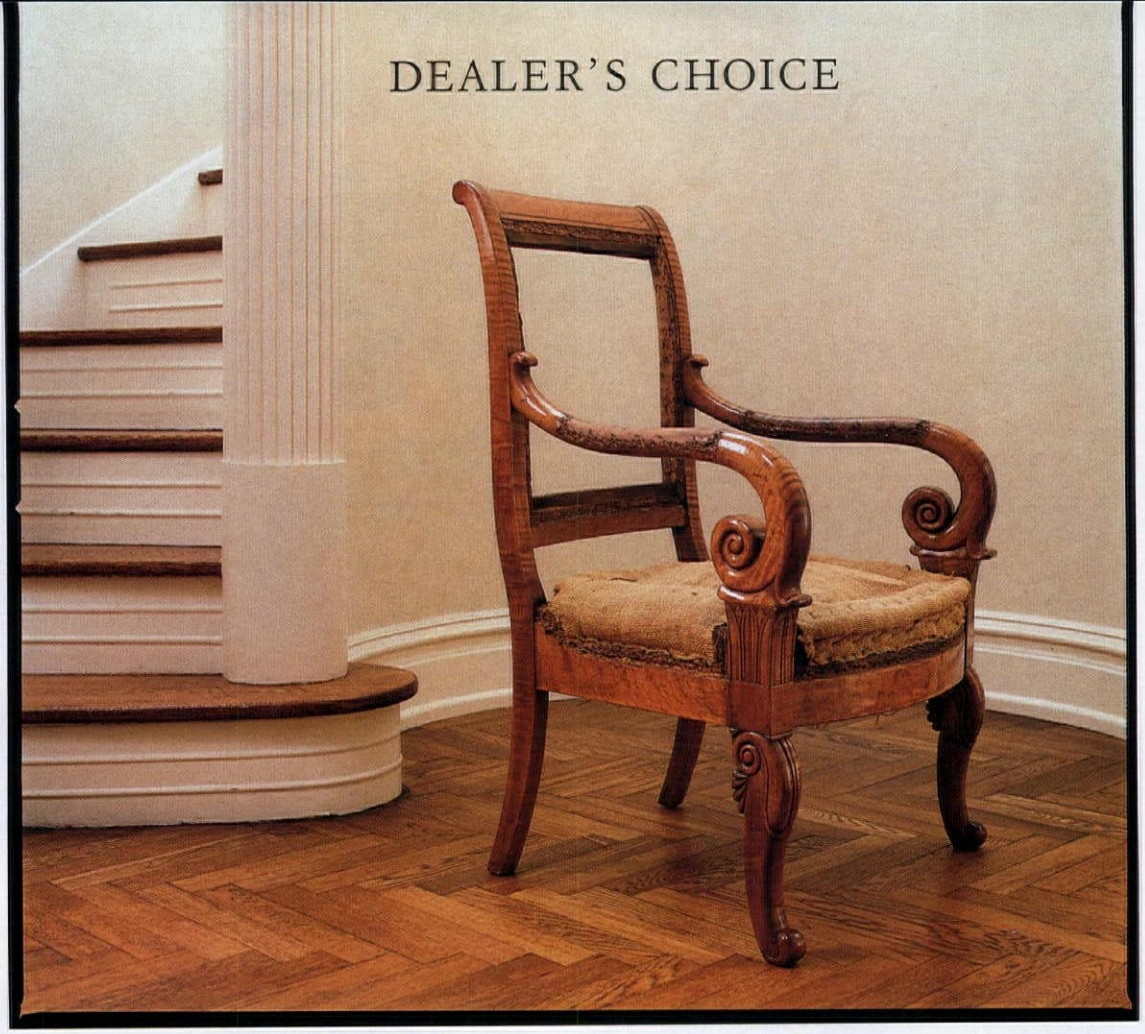
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The All-American

The furniture makers of 19th-century New York, Philadelphia, and Boston have their champion in Carswell Berlin

BY WENDY MOONAN

IT WAS EITHER OEDIPAL or inevitable. When he reached his forties, after running a graphics design firm for years, Carswell Rush Berlin decided he had to be an antiques dealer. The son of a renowned collector of eighteenth-century American furniture, Berlin grew up in New York City surrounded by Queen Anne and Chippendale furniture. Every January he was taken to the Winter Antiques show at the Armory. He read the *Maine Antiques Digest* instead of comics and wandered through the period rooms at the Met instead of the fields of Central Park. When he turned to dealing, however, he eschewed the eighteenth-century antiques he'd grown up with in favor of pieces made between 1800 and 1840 in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore: bold, formal furniture, often carved, gilded, and inlaid with intricate wood veneers. It was a daring move. "Selling this period is hard, because the market for it is thin and earlier styles are more valuable," Berlin says. "Still, relatively speaking, it's more affordable."

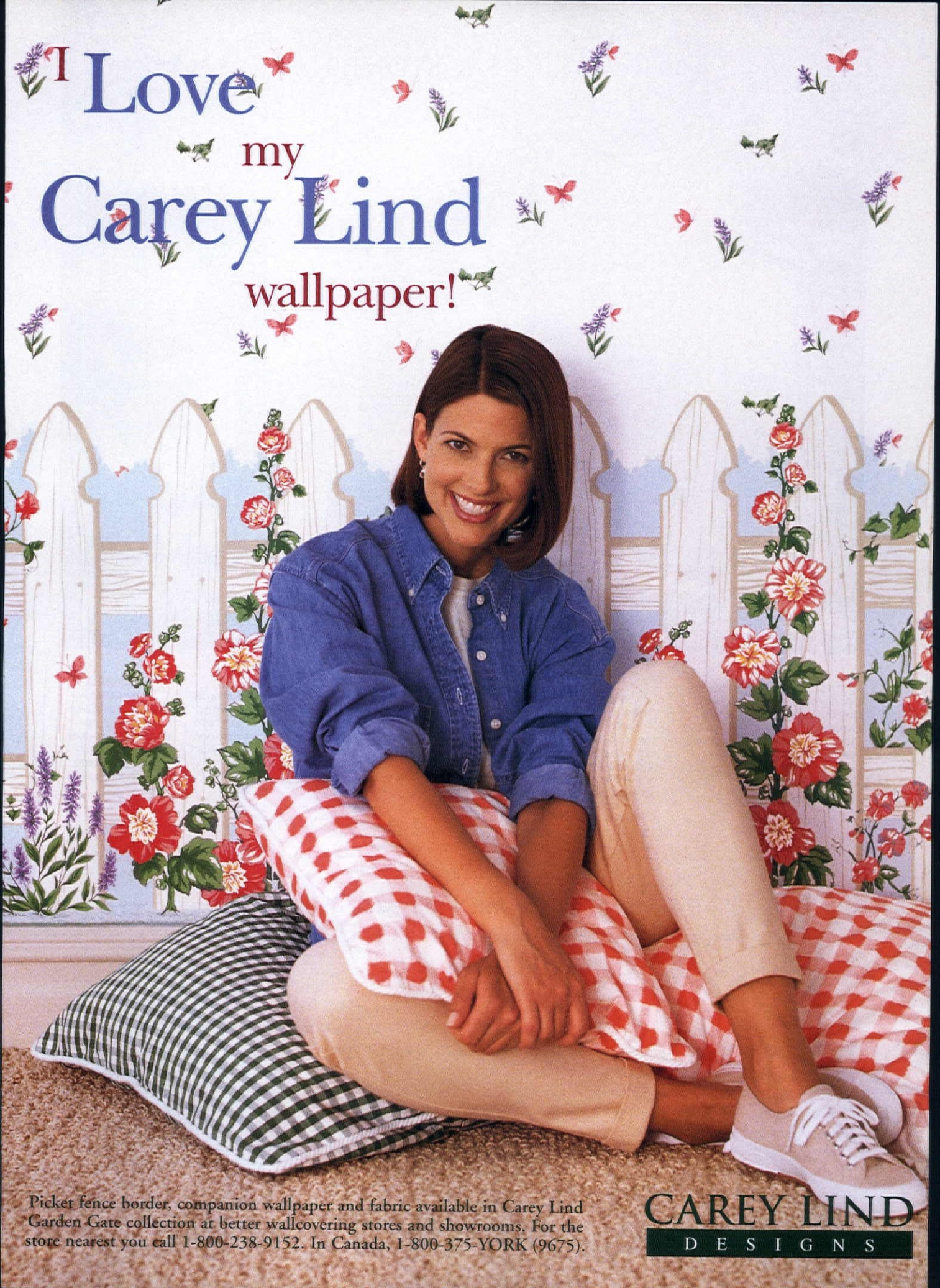
Berlin is as knowledgeable about the famous furniture makers of the time—Charles-Honoré Lannuier and Duncan Phyfe—as he is about cabinetmakers like the Finlays of Baltimore, and Allison, and Deming and Bulkley of New York.

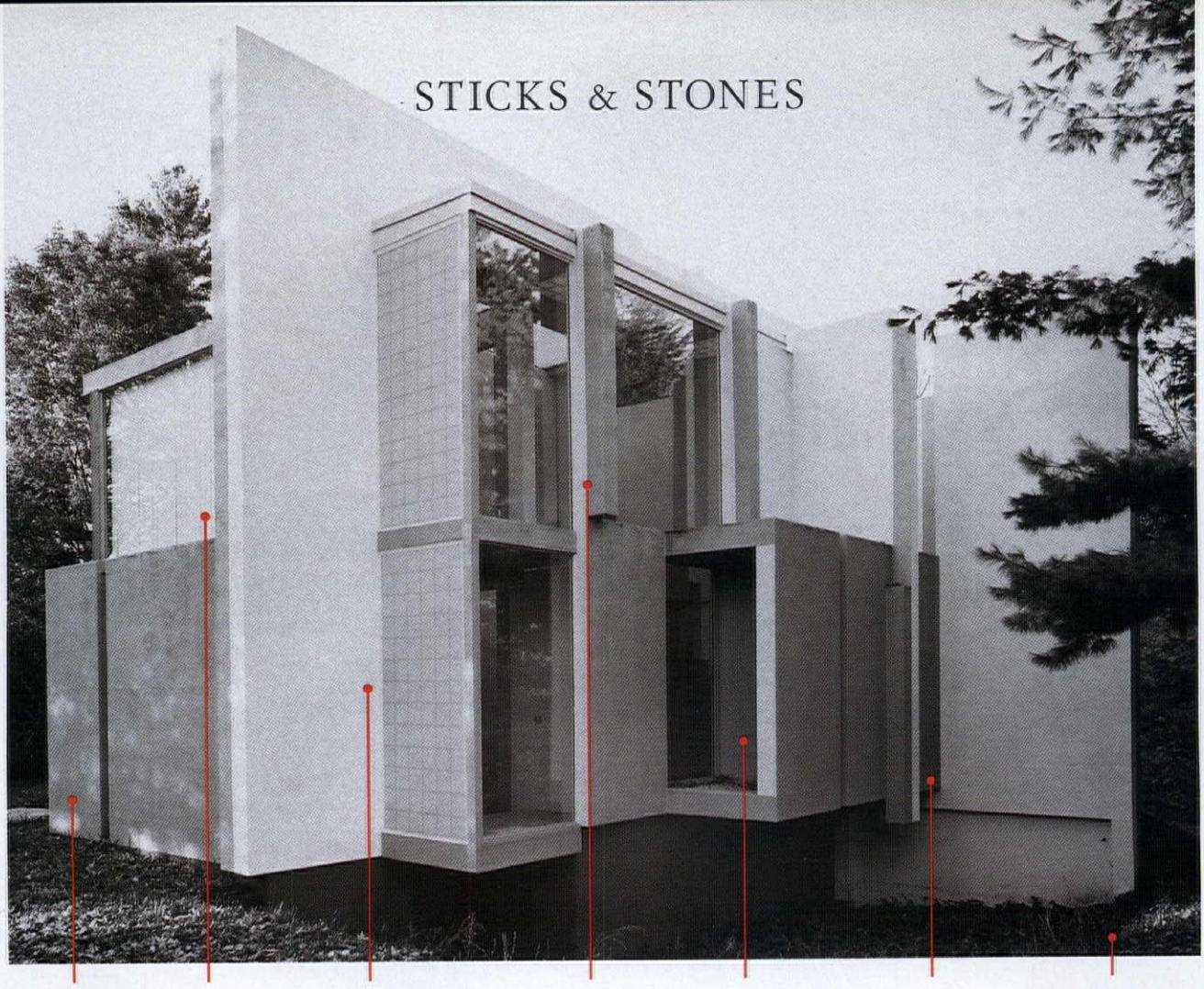
EYE OF THE TIGER **Because there are no comparable tiger-maple American armchairs in public collections, Berlin says this French Restauration chair made in New York, circa 1830, with its ebony inlay, scrolled arms and carved lotus leaves at the knees, is especially important.**

This fall he was invited to participate in the International Fine Art and Antique Dealers Show in New York City (from October 17 to 23). He is confident his American pier tables and bird's-eye-maple chair will stand up to the other dealers' Louis XIV secretaries and Ming tables. He points out the "sophisticated silhouettes" of his side chairs, the reeding on the stiles and seat, the water-leaf carving. "This furniture has every bell and whistle," he says. "The wood looks like it is alive."

Berlin's gamble may pay off. He has already sold to the Met, the White House, and Colonial Williamsburg. Can he now capture an American public?

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DESIGNS



Living Room Note vertical slot instead of window, which effectively destabilizes landscape conventions.

Master Bedroom Indeed, the only bedroom.

A Plane slices through the building, though often its presence is denoted by a void rather than a solid.

Two Colors signify the geometric inversions: one represents interior space, the other, exterior.

Not the Front Door Not anything; no access, no purpose. The real door is hidden around back.

Column fails to reach the ground, thwarting our conventional idea of support.

Recessed Foundation helps building appear to float and makes its top and bottom seem interchangeable.

Form Follows Fiasco

Brilliant to think about and beautiful to look at, Peter Eisenman's House VI is still its own worst enemy

BY MICHAEL POLLAN

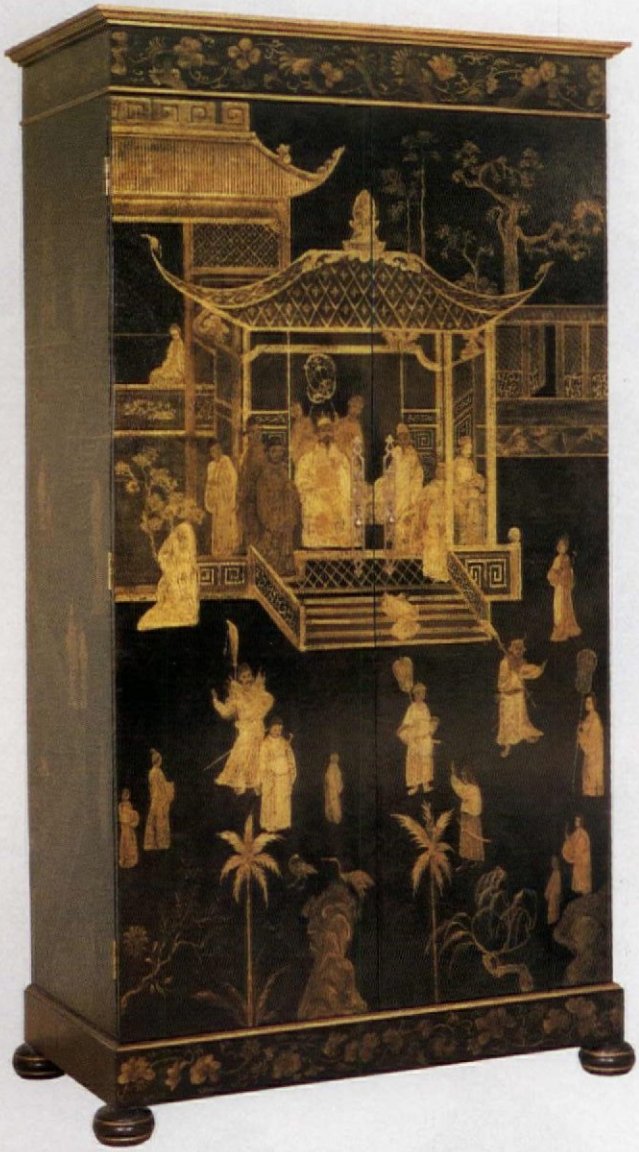
By the time I got to sleep in it, the notorious bed in House VI, the notorious Peter Eisenman house built in northwestern Connecticut in 1976, was no longer sundered along an eight-inch slot in the floor. It's a long story, but, basically, the geometrical system that governs the house's structure dictated that a slender void slice through the floor of the master bedroom in the only place a double bed might go. This meant that Dick and Suzanne Frank, the owners, had to sleep in twin beds on opposite sides of a divide.

The rigors of geometry and modern architecture notwithstanding, this was not an ideal arrangement, so when the Franks renovated their house recently, they asked Eisenman if it would be okay to build a double bed that would bridge the famous slot yet still "nod" in the direction of the former void by having a little notch cut in its base. A mellowed Eisenman gave his blessing, and the Franks now sleep in a double bed, a small but not insignificant triumph of life over modern architecture.

I'd read about all this in *House VI: The Client's Response*, Suzanne Frank's fascinating book about the tribulations of living in a work of art. In addition to being an Important House (the subject of

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDITH TURNER


"I've turned over
a new leaf."
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dozens of articles and monographs), House VI is a difficult house by design. Asked once by *Newsweek* why he would take such a cavalier approach to his clients' needs, Eisenman explained that it was his objective "to shake them out of those needs."

I was curious to know what it would be like to live in such an uncompromising house—to be shaken, as it were, by Peter Eisenman, now one of America's leading architects. So I asked the Franks, who are neighbors, if they'd be willing to let me try out their house for a day or two. Below is a journal of my stay.

ARRIVAL. My wife, Judith, our son, Isaac, and I drive up to find what looks like a spiny gray-and-white spaceship hovering calmly a few feet above the lawn. Isaac steps in first. As soon as I confirm his initial impression—"This is supposed to be a weird kind of house, right, Dad?"—he allows himself to be enchanted. There are slots everywhere, floor-to-ceiling gaps in the walls just wide enough for a four-year-old to slip through. The house is a deconstructed cube of intersecting planes, some of them solid (the walls), others voids (the slots); the "rooms" are simply the spaces left over after the manipulations of these planes, which answer strictly to their own logic. Isaac is transfixed by the fire-engine-red staircase suspended high over the kitchen table.

"Dad? Why is there a staircase on the ceiling?" I attempt an explanation: the architect wanted to make a house that looked as though it could be flipped upside down without anything changing.

"But where does the staircase go, Daddy?"

"Nowhere. It's more like a kind of decoration."

He listens, absorbs, and then comes at it again from the beginning: "But why is there a staircase on the ceiling?"

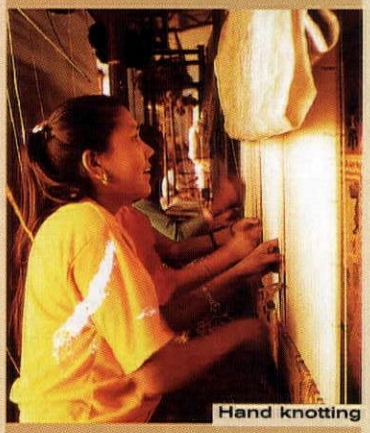
Judith is not nearly so enchanted. "So this is how a laboratory rat feels on day one." It certainly does feel sealed up, claustrophobic; I count more than twenty windows, yet only three deign to open. The relentless minimalism of the surfaces seems impervious to the marks of habitation. "Post-humanist" is a term one architectural theorist used to describe the house; he meant it as a compliment. Is this a house, or a sculpture that just happens to have central heating?

DINNER. In deference to the system of horizontal planes bisecting the space, the counter is set several inches below normal, while the kitchen cabinets (also in deference to the geometry) start six feet off the ground. Dining is as unsettling as cooking. A big column shoves right up against the table, hiding one diner's face from another's. I don't mention to Judith that this particular column has no practical purpose, except, presumably, to shake a family out of its need to communicate.

Also shaken is our relationship to nature. The floor-to-ceiling window by the dining table actually hides a lovely view of the woods, since the glass is as opaque as the frosted door of a shower. Judith points out that most of the exterior views Eisenman's windows do supply are views of Eisenman's building.

"This place is like something designed by a teenage boy," Judith says over dinner. "It says: 'Look at me! Look at me!'"


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To The Trade

Though I can't exactly see her (on account of the column), I can see her point: I've never been in a house so relentlessly conscious of itself, or so insistent that we pay attention to it, and it alone.

BEDTIME. Plainly the house was designed for a couple with no children and no wish to entertain; the sole bathroom is located at the end of a catwalk that can be reached only through the bedroom. The bathroom itself is post-humanist to a fault: a tiny, windowless, sinkless afterthought that couldn't more eloquently express disdain for our earthbound bodies. Every other "room" is pierced by several slots or larger openings, so there is no privacy whatsoever. While I am reading to Isaac on the pullout couch in the living room, we look up through the Plexiglas window in the floor and watch Judith getting ready for bed. We wave.

When I get upstairs, Judith shows me a weird little alcove in the bedroom, a vertical slot in the wall that gives onto a dead space sealed behind Plexiglas. The space is clotted with dust balls and cobwebs; these form another, even more subversive network of intersecting planes, a spidery parody of the house. This is no knock on the Franks' housekeeping: there is no way to clean this space short of hiring a carpenter to remove the Plexiglas.

At first, I thought Judith was being small-minded about the architecture by dwelling on the pockets of grime, the dog hairs in the wall slots, the rust staining the space-age acrylic walls outside. But later I realize that House VI's relationship to dirt and decay—to time and all its indignities—is no small part of its significance. House VI was probably never so perfect, never so true to itself, as on the day before the day the Franks moved in. Or maybe you need to go back to the day Eisenman drew it. Ever since, the house has been caught up in an inescapable process of decline, as the ordinary frictions of nature and everyday life have taken their incremental toll, exposing the dream of pure architectural Idea for the impossibility it is.

DAWN. The most gorgeous, ethereal light steals over the bedroom. I rise quietly and have a look around. Dawn flatters this house, the slant, silvery light heightening the poetry of its abstractions and suppressing the prose of its impracticalities. Sipping my coffee in the living room, I admire the fierce formal logic of its spaces as I try to decipher the elaborate geometrical game Eisenman was playing, marveling at how this wall turned into that void and then passed through the shell of the house to emerge as a wall again outside. For this brief space of time I don't resent being asked to rethink my assumptions about comfort, about inside and out, even about upside down and right side up. Like any strong work of modern art, House VI wakes us from the sleep of daily life, forcing us to look at all that we ordinarily take for granted.

Then Isaac begins to stir. He wants to go over the issue of the upside-down staircase. I try to change the subject to Cinnamon Toast Crunch. Here is yet another light in which to see Eisenman's work, and in it House VI, like Cinderella's coach, is quickly turning back into a ridiculous pumpkin. Art does wake us up, absolutely; but we people need our sleep, too.

J. SEWARD JOHNSON, JR.



PHOTO BY KATE TURNING, SCULPTURE BASED ON PHOTO BY BERNARD OF HOLLYWOOD.

"FOREVER MARILYN"

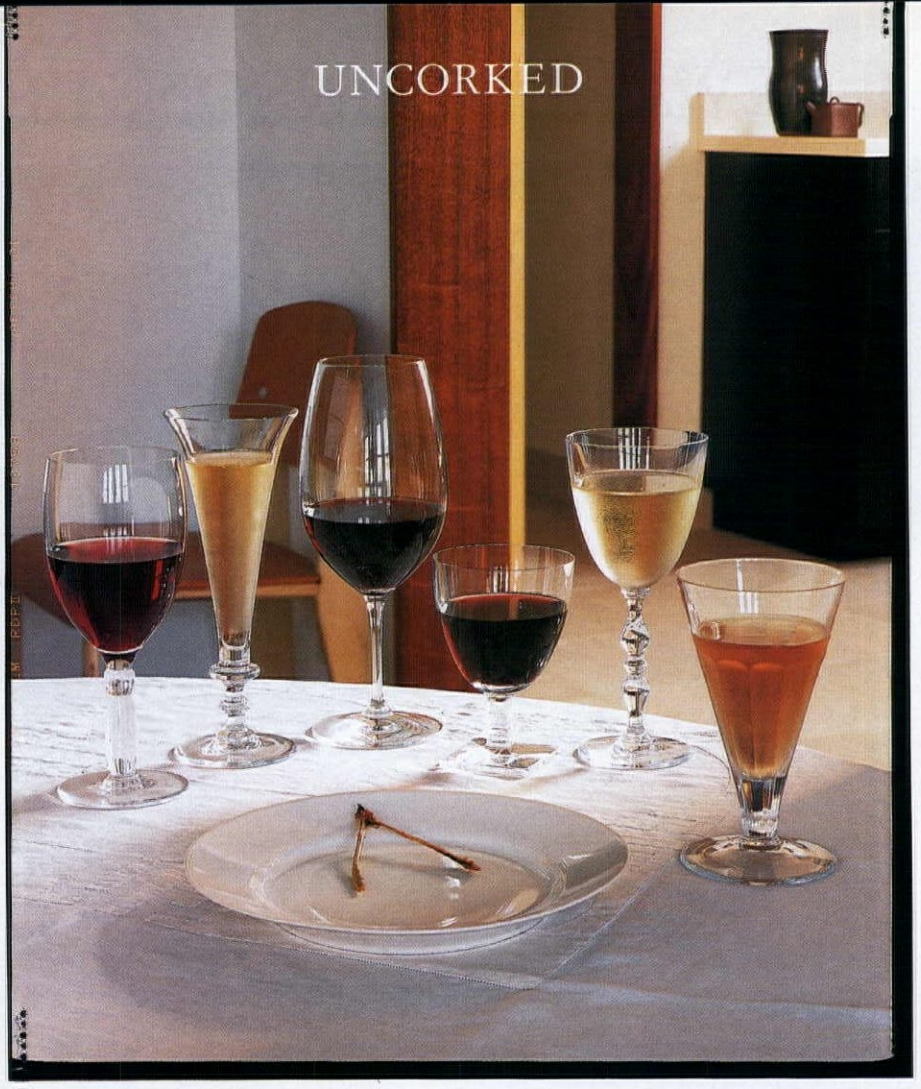
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What Goes with Turkey?

Good wines can take on the big bird and all its trimmings

BY JAY McINERNEY

MY FATHER WENT through a period of drinking bourbon old-fashioneds with Thanksgiving dinner. His was the cocktail generation. On my eighteenth Thanksgiving under his roof, he showed me the recipe: one teaspoon of sugar, several dashes of Angostura bitters, one tablespoon of hot water, and a shot or two of bourbon. The maraschino cherry was optional. Perhaps the picture of the turkey on the bottle inspired this particular match. The problem with hard liquor, of course, is that it tends to be highly combustible, often leading to conflagrations at family gatherings, or at least at ours: I seem to remember a certain amount of weeping, shouting, recrimination, and gnashing of teeth. *Long Day's Journey into Night* kind of stuff. Which can be particularly awkward for visiting lovers and foreigners. I gave up drinking Thanksgiving old-fashioneds shortly after I started, and ever since I have been experimenting with vinous lubricants for the big dry bird of the Pilgrims.

Let's begin with a caveat: there is no perfect solution, no sublime match made in heaven à la oysters and Chablis, Yquem and foie gras. While turkey is something of a tabula rasa, the traditional accompaniments—cranberries, yams, stuffing, et al.—complicate the flavor-matching equation considerably. Which gives us a certain amount of freedom: you can pick your favorite color—white, pink, or red—and work from there.

At the risk of sounding like I'm wimping out, I would always recommend champagne. First, because it's the wine for special occasions, and second, because it has the acidity to stand up to those candied yams. Last Thanksgiving, I was very happy with Krug's undated Grande Cuvée, a big baritone of a champagne, which, with its dried-fruit flavors

FINE FOR FOWL Good companions for turkey include, from left: burgundy, champagne, zinfandel, Pinot Noir, Gewürztraminer, and rosé champagne.

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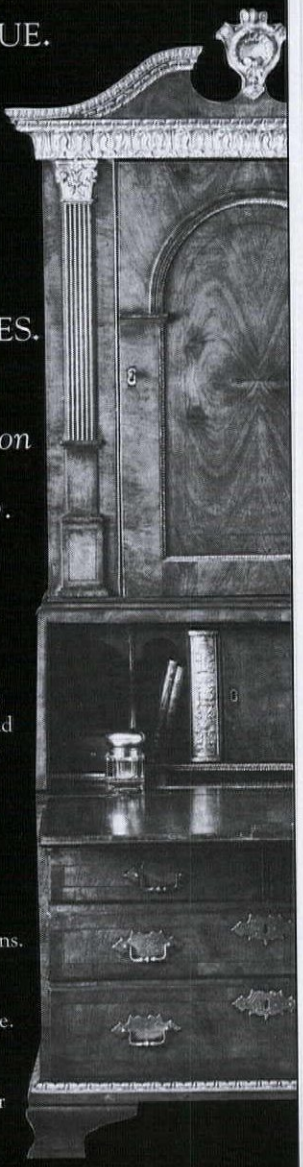
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and leaf-pile nose, always tastes to me like autumn in a glass. Krug has just released its 1989 vintage, ahead of the more backward '88—a good move that other makers should have considered. The '89 champagnes in general are all drinking well now. The '89 Veuve Clicquot and Bollinger Grande Année are two excellent, more affordable examples. Rosé champagne—made with 10 percent still red wine—has a little more depth of flavor than the white stuff, and that can come in handy when you have a mouthful of relatively bland bird. And it looks good—even more festive than regular champagne. If by any chance you are coming to my house for Thanksgiving, I would recommend that you bring a bottle or two of the sublime 1986 Dom Perignon Rosé ($200).

If you don't want bubbles, one of the best Thanksgiving white wines comes to us via Alsace, where white wines have to stand up to a hearty Germanic cuisine. Gewürztraminer, with its exotic, spicy flavors, is my favorite Thanksgiving white wine. Even when vinified dry, it always seems slightly sweet, and nicely complements the sweeter side dishes of Thanksgiving. Gewürztraminer is not for the faint of heart; those who are freaked out by the zany South Sea flavors—litchi nuts, rotting pineapples—might do better with a half-dry (*halbtrocken*) German Riesling or, if you'd rather buy American, Bonny Doon's inexpensive Pacific Rim Riesling. The only really good American example of Gewürz I have tasted comes from Martinelli Vineyards, best known for its legendary Jackass Hill zinfandel, which, come to think of it, I may drink this Thanksgiving if I can manage to lay my hands on any. With its bold fruit and peppery grace notes, zinfandel is one of the best red-wine solutions to turkey and a spicy dressing. Red zin is definitely the patriotic choice, since, like the turkey—which Ben Franklin proposed as the national bird—it is an American invention. As a rule of thumb, any zin that starts with an *R* seems to be good: Rafanelli, Ridge, Rabbit Ridge, Renwood, Ravenswood, Rosenblum, et al.

Rather than wrestling their turkey to the ground and clubbing it with a big red zin, certain well-trained palates, including that belonging to this magazine's food editor, prefer to romance it with Pinot Noir or burgundy. The latter is a good choice this year since the excellent '95 red burgundies are just coming on the market. Although we're told that they will age well, the lesser growths can be consumed with this year's bird; their young tannins—the structural-steel element of a well-constructed red wine—will help them stand up to the heartier elements of the meal. Burgundy works best if you go light on the sweet side dishes and heavy on the cash. Burgundy is legendarily confusing, but Jadot and Drouhin are almost always reliable. The best news in recent years from the Côte d'Or is the resurrection of Bouchard Père et Fils, one of the largest producers, which under new ownership is finally living up to its massive potential. Look for its *premiers crus* Volnays and Beaunes in particular.

Thanksgiving coincides with the much-ballyhooed release of Beaujolais Nouveau, which must be why people keep telling me it's a great Thanksgiving quaff. Or maybe it's because it's the liquid equivalent of yams with lots of marshmallows on top. Whatever you choose to wash down your turkey with, try to remember that if you hear yourself whining that your parents loved your brother more than they loved you, you've probably consumed too much.

THE OENO FILE

88 VEUVE CLICQUOT LA GRANDE DAME ROSÉ If you have recently been fired from Time Warner with an obscene severance package, this is the wine for you. A fantastically subtle wine that lingers on the palate and in the mind like a great poem. $200

89 BOLLINGER GRANDE ANNÉE When I say full-bodied, I mean this is champers that can bench-press twice its own weight. But smart, too. A nutty, ripe champagne. $50

95 BOUCHARD PÈRE ET FILS BEAUNE CLOS DE LA MOUSSE This is why we keep trying with burgundy. Delicious cherry fruit for the child in you; mushrooms for the adult. $33

94 ZIND HUMBRECHT GEWÜRZTRAMINER Hits you right out of the glass like a peach squashed in your nostrils; a nice viscous, mouth-coating texture. $19

RABBIT RIDGE ZINFANDEL At least as well stuffed as your turkey—twenty bucks' worth of ripe, jammin' fruit for ten. This wine won't be intimidated by the side dishes. $10

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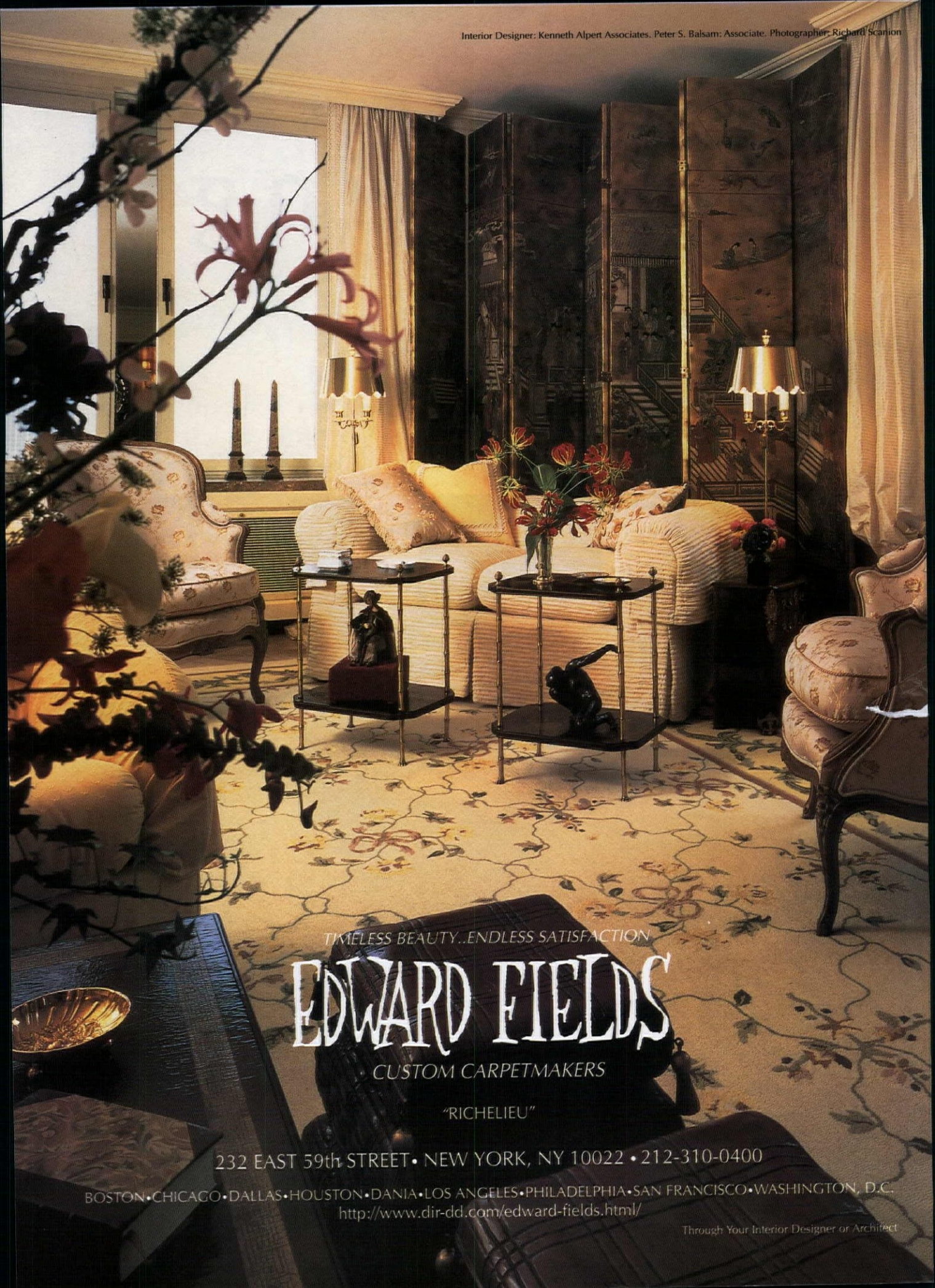
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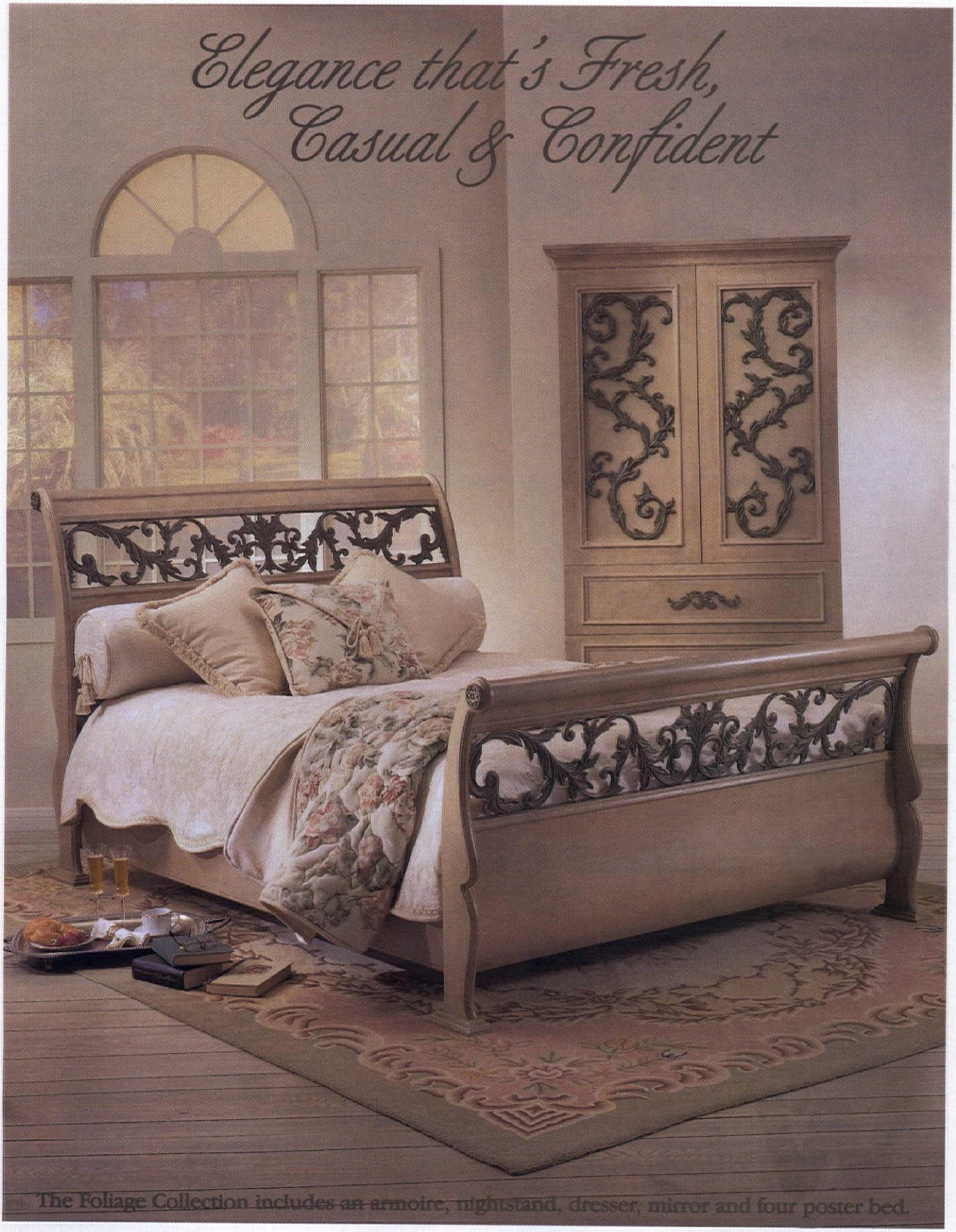
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February 1948

Housework, the curse of the servantless class

BY VÉRONIQUE VIENNE

When it became clear that many workers preferred factory garb to the uniforms they had worn as domestic servants before the war, socially prominent New Yorkers had to learn to tidy up on their own. *House & Garden* endorsed the can-do spirit of the newly servantless by celebrating their housekeeping talents: Mrs. Drayton Cochran (top right), married to a son of European nobility, waxed and polished her antiques with two-sided mitts. Mrs. John P. Marquand, Jr. (bottom right), daughter-in-law of novelist John P. Marquand, handled her electric floor waxer like a pro. Mrs. Cass Canfield, Jr. (bottom left), whose father-in-law ran the publishing firm of Harper & Row, polished her silver once a week. And Mrs. Curzon Taylor, whose ancestor, the brilliant Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, had been viceroy to India, vacuumed in the afternoon.

But even the most diligent socialite was no match for the happy bustle of a domestic staff. One gets the sense that all of these women longed for the time when, in the words of one of Mrs. Marquand's forebears, a servant was almost a member of the family, "the most efficient helper and the tenderest friend."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEMUS

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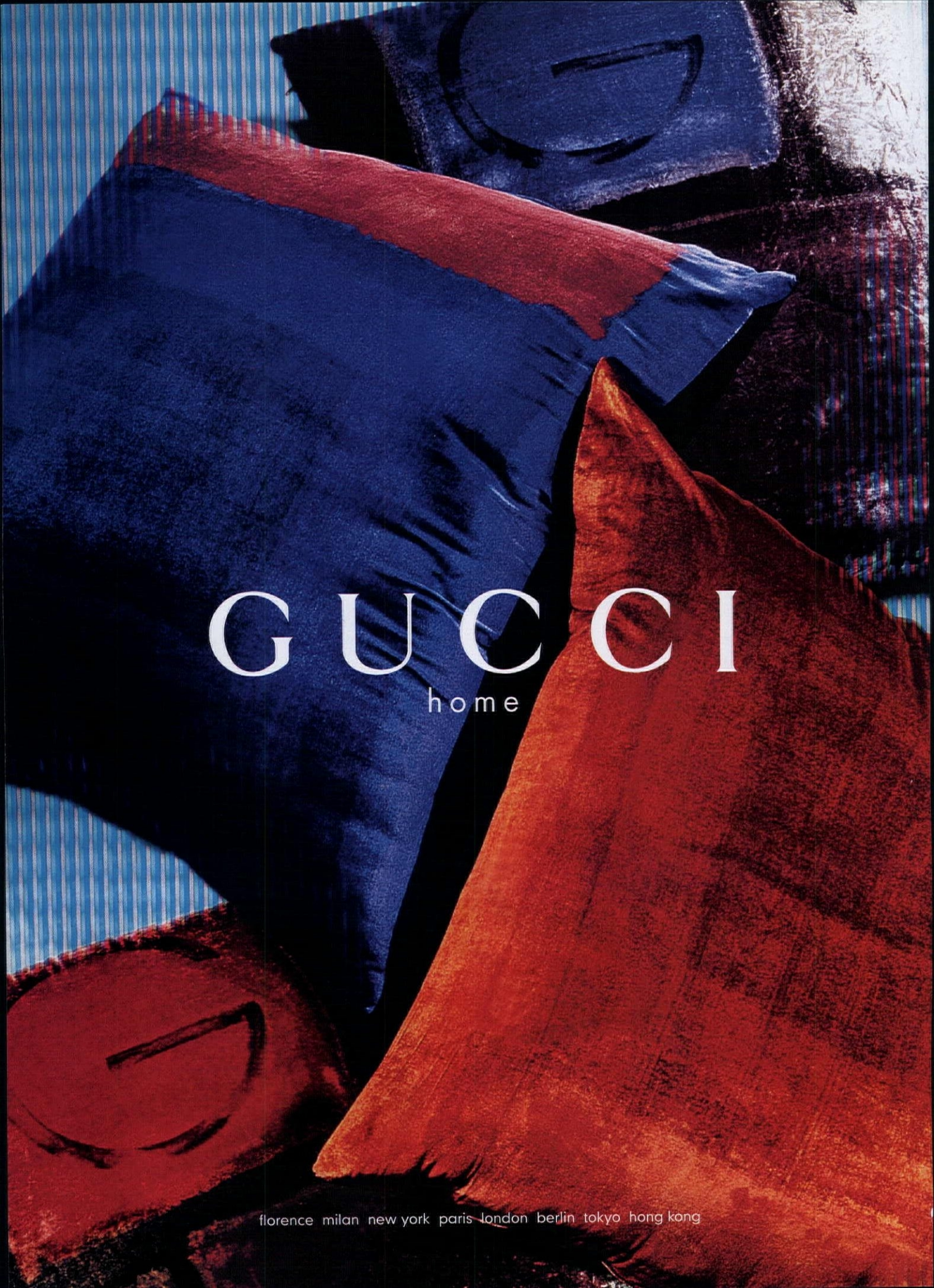
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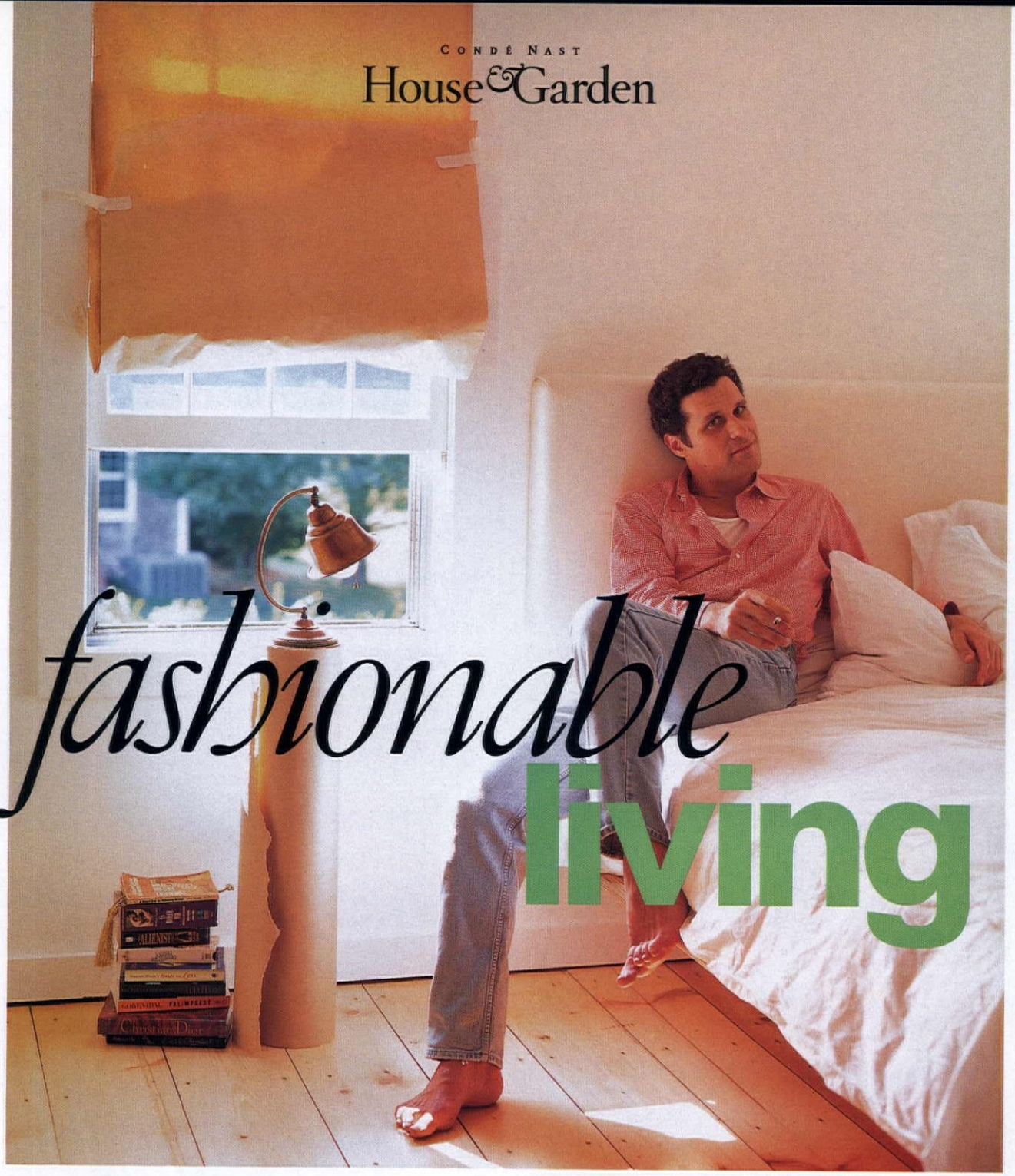
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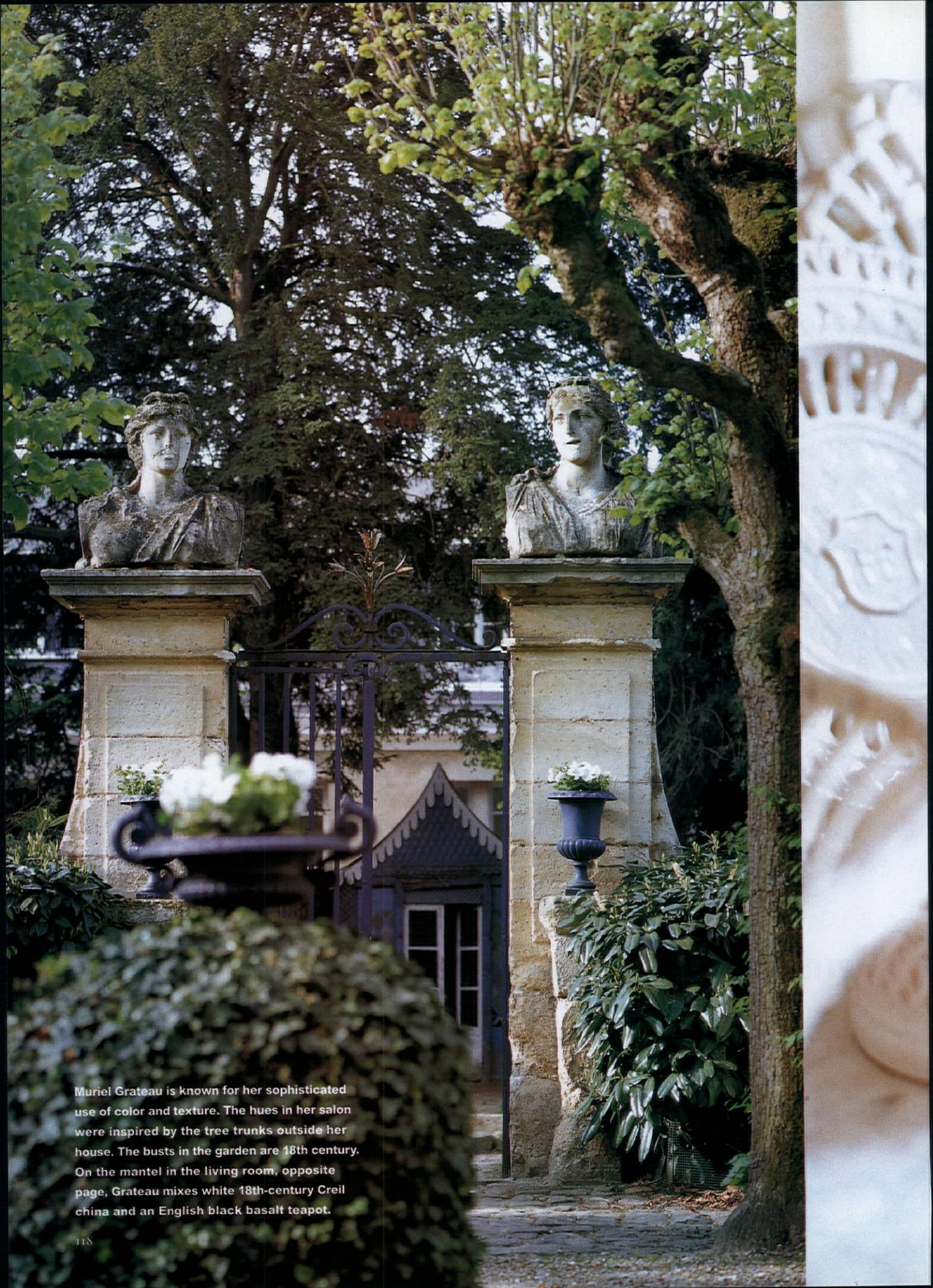

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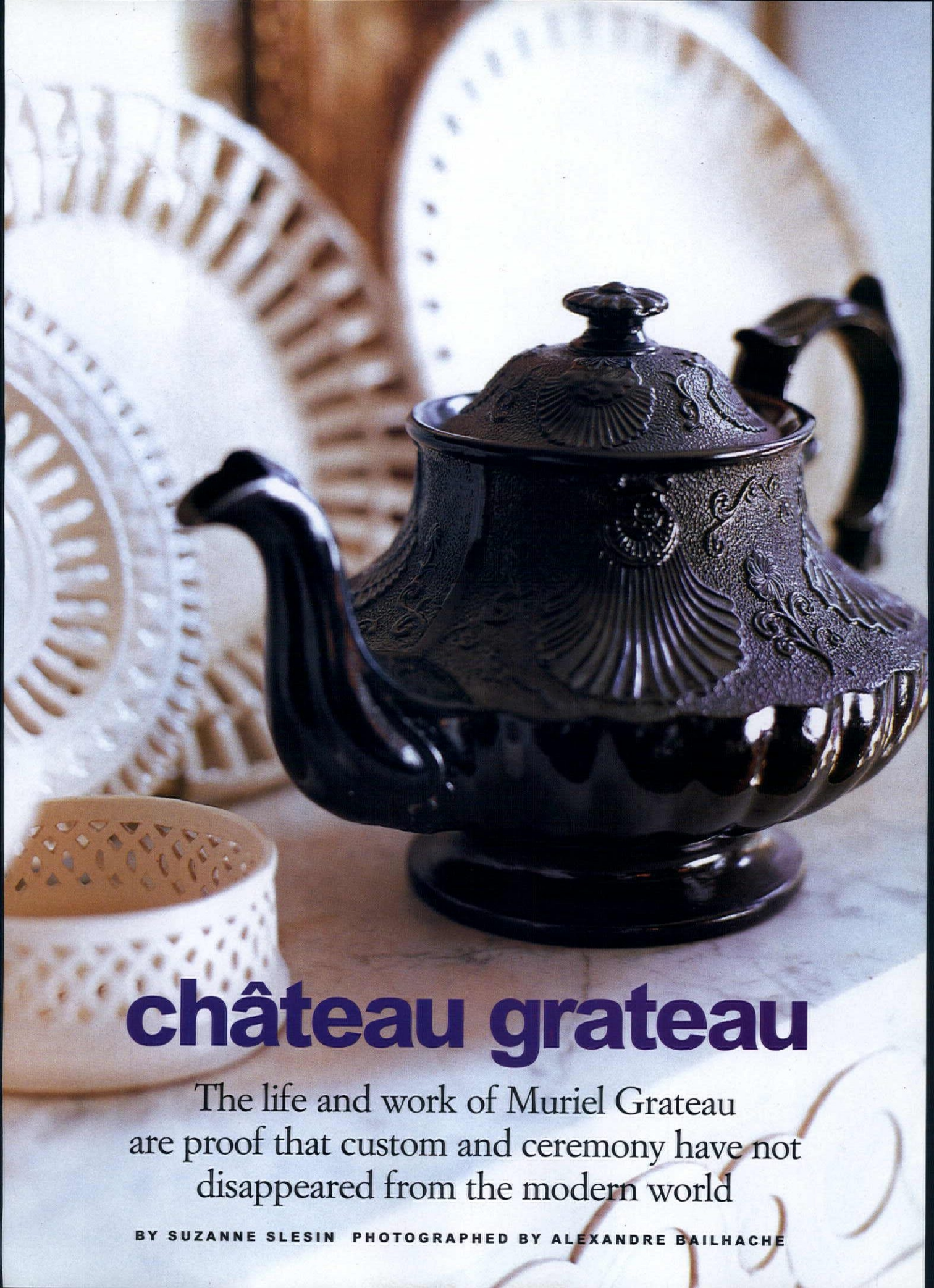


fashionable living

FIRST PRINCIPLE If paint is fashion's new perfume, the shelter business is its next frontier. Almost every designer we know has plans to launch or expand a home collection. But can we expect enduring design from people who want us to change our clothes every five minutes? Well, look in the following pages at the ways a wide range of fashion people have done their houses and gardens. These folk are fearless, not faddish, about decorating, and are as different from one another as Isaac Mizrahi (see story, page 162) from Dominique Sirop, or Simon Doonan from Muriel Grateau. What they have in common is a willingness to do their own thing, secure that home is, if not our second skin, at least one window into the soul.



Muriel Grateau is known for her sophisticated use of color and texture. The hues in her salon were inspired by the tree trunks outside her house. The busts in the garden are 18th century. On the mantel in the living room, opposite page, Grateau mixes white 18th-century Creil china and an English black basalt teapot.



château grateau

The life and work of Muriel Grateau are proof that custom and ceremony have not disappeared from the modern world

BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDRE BAILHACHE





INTERPRETING CLASSICAL French culture in an utterly modern way is Muriel Grateau's forte. Her apartment near Paris is a testimony to the traditional French *art de vivre* at the same time that it is fully adapted to contemporary life. "It is fine to have a nostalgia for the past," Grateau says, "but it is more important to live with beautiful things in the present."

Grateau's shop, nestled under the rhythmic arcades of the Palais Royal in Paris's chic first arrondissement, sells table and bed linens, vintage china, and her own china and glassware inspired by antique Chinese ceramics and Venetian glass. It has become a magnet for well-heeled Americans, who make up a large portion of her clientele, and for taste-makers such as Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, and Paloma Picasso, who are aware of Grateau's reputation as a superb and sophisticated colorist. The table linens come in seventy hues, and the bed linens in thirty-six. Not surprisingly, she has opened a second shop on the rue de Beaune in the seventh arrondissement.

It is Grateau's sensitivity to the most subtle nuances of color that prompted her to open the first shop five years ago. "I found that all the things I saw for the house were very aggressive," she says, "and I feel that objects that one uses every day must be discreet."

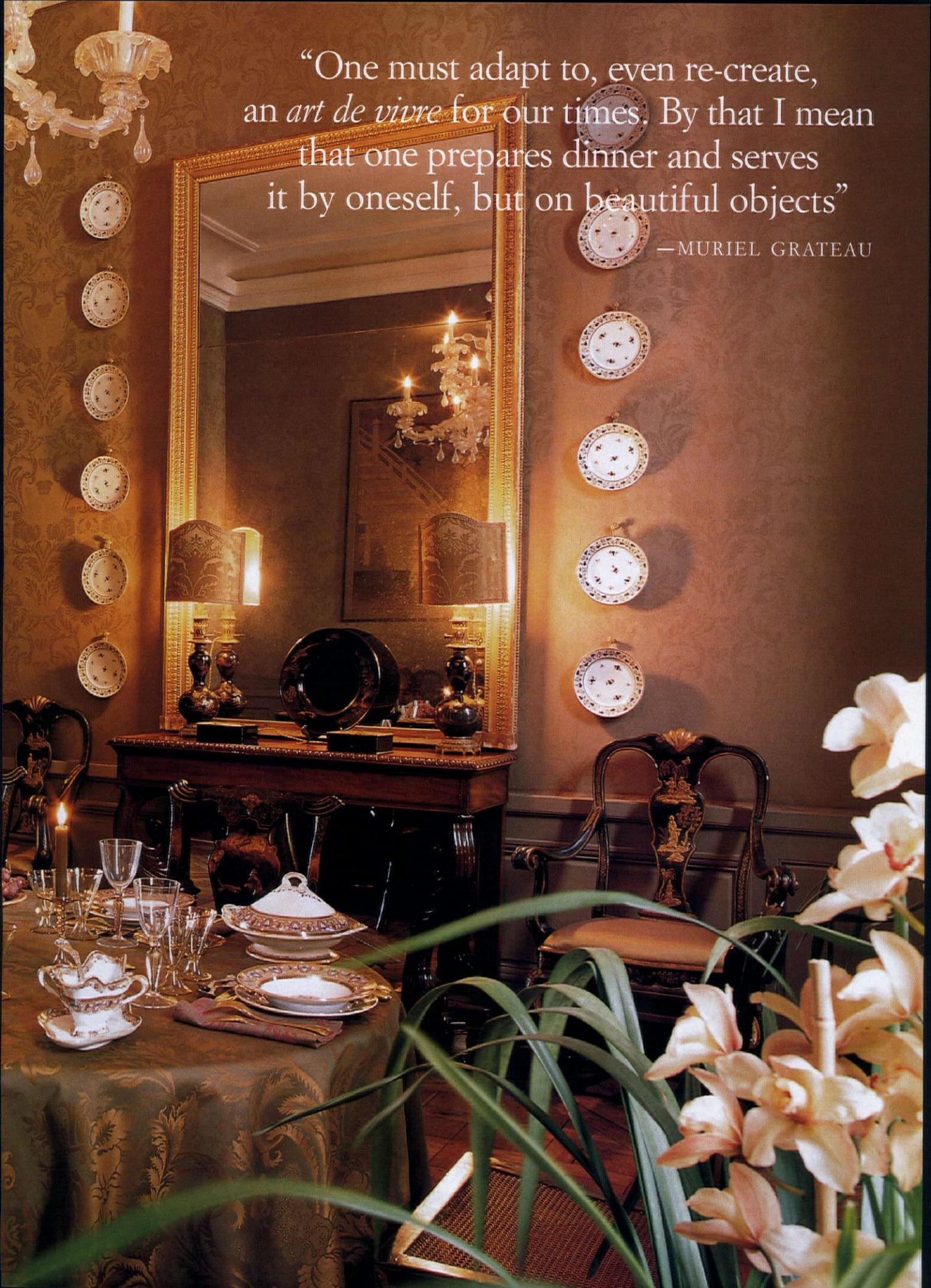
Grateau spent twenty-five years in Italy as a fashion designer, and only returned to France five years ago. She and her husband recently moved to an apartment in a house in Versailles. The neighborhood, as well as the house, dates from about 1660, when the first part of the Château de Versailles was being built by Louis XIV.

Although the apartment—a suite

Extravagantly tall windows allow sunlight to flood the apartment's predominantly black-and-white living room. Grateau has combined Anglo-Indian armchairs, right, and Art Deco bronze vases from Christofle, far left, with the room's original paneling, parquet Versailles floor, and Louis XVI marble mantelpiece.



The walls in the elegant dining room and the table are covered in the same damask linen fabric. The table is set with antique Minton china and Venetian-inspired glasses by Grateau. The lacquered chairs are 17th-century English and Dutch. Lit candles on the table and in the chandelier provide a magical feeling, she says.


"One must adapt to, even re-create,
an *art de vivre* for our times. By that I mean
that one prepares dinner and serves
it by oneself, but on beautiful objects"
—MURIEL GRATEAU



The round table in the foyer, opposite page, is often set for buffets. Grateau, right, keeps the antique china, which she mixes with new pieces, in a closet in the living room. In the foyer, below, she groups together objects of contrasting textures that share the rich color of the mahogany mantel—Sarreguemines china, Wedgwood plates, a Dutch chair.



of high-ceilinged rooms with perfect proportions—is situated only a few miles from Paris, Grateau says the area exerts the aura of a fairy tale in which birds sing, leaves rustle on centuries-old trees, and the light always seems to be gentle and limpid.

THE APARTMENT, with its tall doors and windows, exudes serenity and elegance. Grateau calls the rooms "beautiful volumes," and she has created a color palette that unifies them while also allowing each to have a distinctive look. "I based the decoration of the whole apartment on a single earth color," says Grateau, who was inspired by the color of the tree trunks outside her windows. Not only is this the background hue of many twelfth- and thirteenth-century paintings, she adds, but it is well suited to the old paneling, imperfect wood floors, and matte ceilings all of which she left as she found them. "Time has worked the materials," she says. "Nothing is straight, not the parquet floors, nor the paneling."



It is against this well-patinated background that the designer has forged her novel interpretation of classic French decor. "Today, one must adapt to, even recreate, an *art de vivre* for our times," says Grateau. "By that I mean that one prepares dinner and serves it by oneself, but on beautiful objects."

Each room seems to amplify the others. The dining room, with its twelve-foot-long seventeenth-century Japanese screen on one wall, and seventeenth-century

muriel grateau

the short course

RESIDENCE *A high-ceilinged apartment in Versailles overlooking Louis XIV's vegetable gardens. It took about 650 yards of 96-inch-wide fabric to cover the walls.*
TRAINING *Twenty-five years in Milan as a fashion designer, creating lines for Basile, Genny, Complice, Mario Valentino, and Ermenegildo Zegna.*
INFLUENCES *The world of decorative objects—Venetian glass, Chinese porcelain—rather than fashion.*
GREATEST HITS *Solid-color porcelains; table linens in 70 colors, bed linens in 36.*
CLIENTS *Catherine Deneuve, Isabelle Adjani, Philippe Noiret, Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, Jacques Grange, David Mlinaric, Peter Marino.*
FAVORITE COLORS *What she calls "non colors, in all their nuances."*
QUOTE *"The convivial table is where it all begins."*



The sheets and pillowcases in the master bedroom display the many permutations of a single hue for which Grateau is known. The linen damask fabric on the walls matches the upholstered headboard and bedcover. The gilded porcelain breakfast set, designed by Grateau, is from the collections she sells in her shops. Sources, see back of book.



subtle is as subtle does

▶ The arresting nature of Muriel Grateau's rooms arises from the subtle variations she rings on one theme—the numerous mauves in her bedroom, for instance, and the blacks and whites in the living room. The way in which she mixes antiques with contemporary things provides her decor with much of its drama.

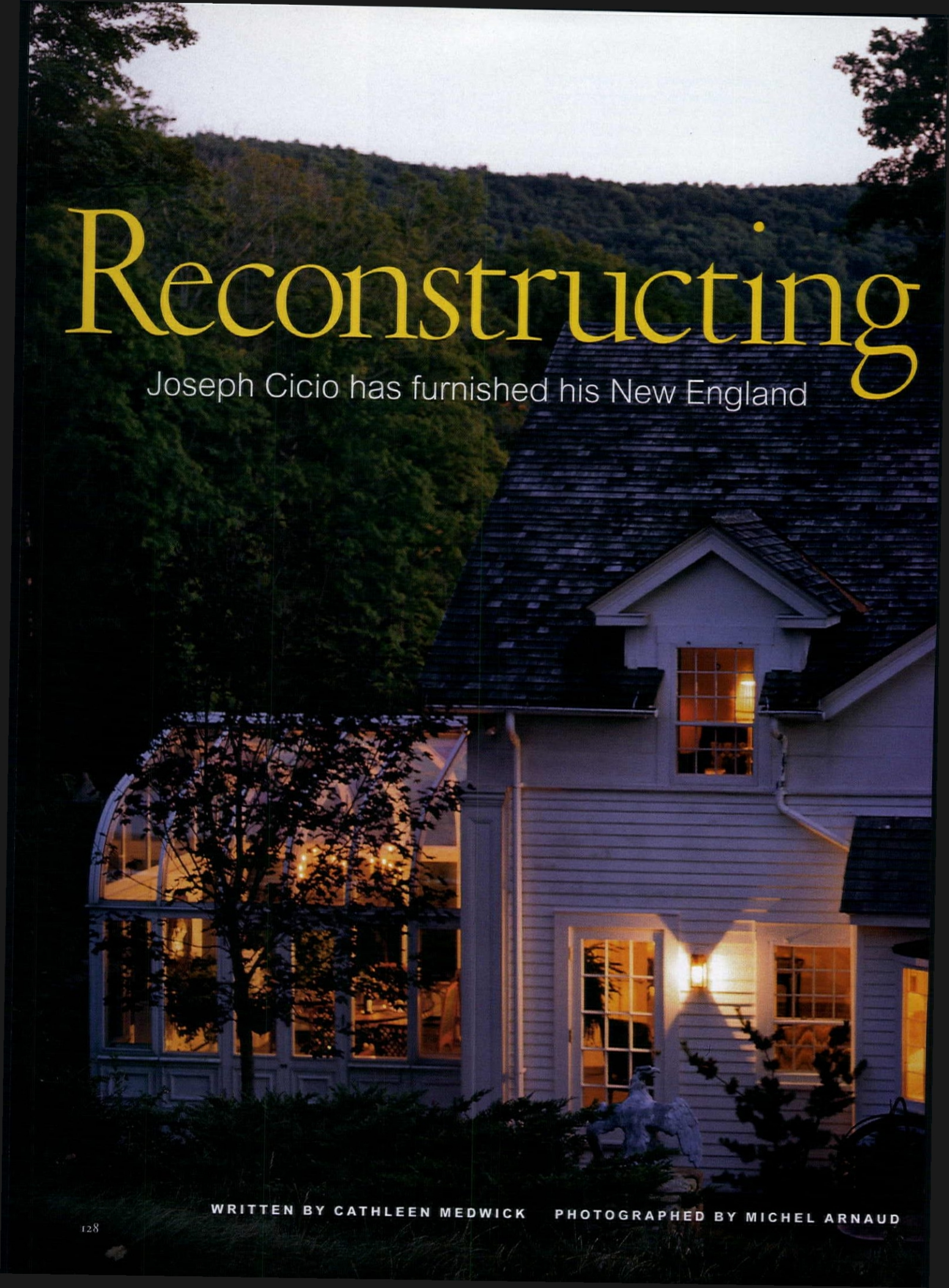
English and Dutch lacquered chairs, has an Anglo-Oriental feel. The walls are covered in a linen Grateau created after being inspired by eighteenth-century Venetian textiles. "I chose the linen because it was a rather 'poor' material," she says, "and would go well with the provincial feel of the apartment."

The adjoining living room is far more stark. White eighteenth-century French Creil china is paired with an English basalt teapot on the Louis XVI mantelpiece; ebony Anglo-Indian armchairs, silver Indian-Portuguese stools, and ochre-hued bronze Art Deco vases from Christofle set the room's rigorous tone. "I don't like strict historical reproductions," Grateau says, "and am more interested in playing with the relationship of the colors and materials of the various objects to the decorative elements in a house."

In setting the table at home, Grateau combines the ceremonial with the informal. Amethysts, topazes, mauves, and pale greens are played off against each other. Antique china, such as her set of nineteenth-century Minton, takes its place on the table. "I love its heaviness, and its colors are particularly beautiful in daylight." Dusk brings out a larger service of the Minton in raspberry, blue, and gold, and lots of candles to provide a magical, festive air. "Candles, especially in the entrance hall, and, on cool nights, a fire in the fireplace are welcoming to guests," adds Grateau, who seems to take pride in the way the light transforms the feeling of her rooms from one moment of the day to the next.

On a day in late spring, Grateau looks out the window as the light begins to dim and shadows obscure the unusual eighteenth-century busts atop the pilasters of the garden gate below. "You know," she says, "that in France we call this floor *l'étage noble*, the noble floor." Located at the top of a wide, curving staircase that rises ceremoniously from the ground floor, the spacious enfilade of rooms was the center of the household in the seventeenth century. "All the events of life took place in these rooms," says Grateau.

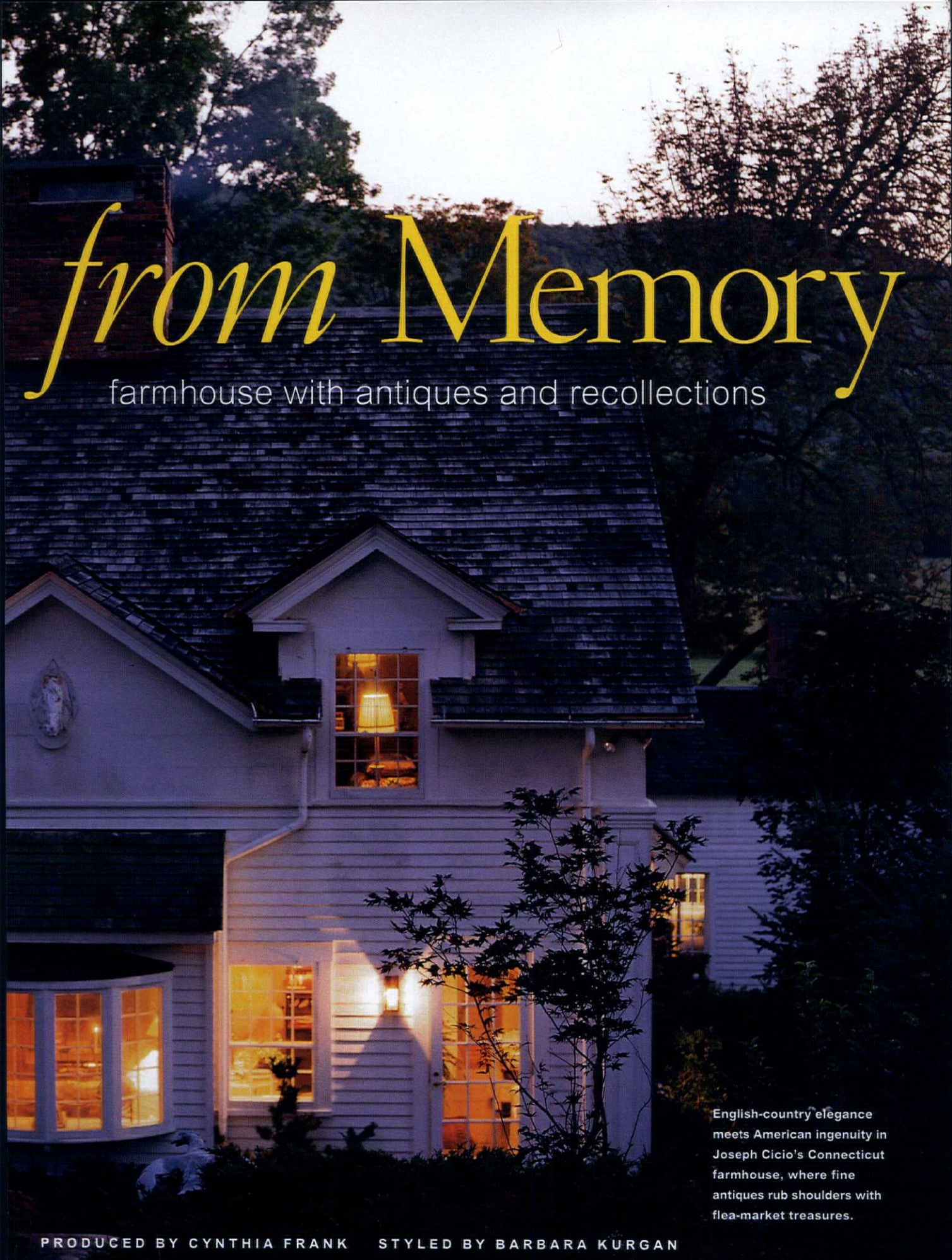
They still do.



Reconstructing

Joseph Cicio has furnished his New England

WRITTEN BY CATHLEEN MEDWICK PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHEL ARNAUD



from Memory

farmhouse with antiques and recollections

English-country elegance meets American ingenuity in Joseph Cicio's Connecticut farmhouse, where fine antiques rub shoulders with flea-market treasures.

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK STYLED BY BARBARA KURGAN



Two fireplaces make the L-shaped living room a cozy concoction of British staples (fruitwood secretary, armchairs done in Bennison's Bird and Basket fabric, ebony Anglo-Indian side table) and objects from afar (Turkish brass and inlaid trunk, terra-cotta putti from Normandy). The tole urns on the mantel came from Slim Keith.

A GORGEOUS GHOST INHABITS Joseph Cicio's Connecticut farmhouse, which he has furnished not only with antiques and oddities but with carefully polished recollections. When Cicio bought the place five years ago, he knew what he wanted: English-country style in a rough and cozy New England setting. Formerly the chairman of I. Magnin and president of Donna Karan's retail development division, he also wanted a place that he could refurbish in the spirit of his muse, Slim Keith, the brilliant socialite he met while house-hunting, whose marriages to Howard Hawks, Leland Hayward, and Lord Kenneth Keith gave her ample experience in the decorating of houses. Slim Keith never stayed here (she died before Cicio moved in), but her taste informs every room of the house. That taste, Cicio says, "had nothing to do with wealth. It was sensitivity. It was style. It was knowing how to mix humor with exquisite pieces. It was knowing how to mix a little bamboo table from Azuma with a Regency cabinet; and it came off great."

Cicio has had plenty of opportunities to develop his own style, combing the world for objects he loves, then combining them according to the principles Slim Keith taught him: A house should have personality. It should have life (she filled each of her own places with images of animals, and at least one live one). There should always be a touch of red. And so



lightening up

In restoring a farmhouse that had endured several additions in its three-hundred-year history, Joseph Cicio unified its parts by bathing every room in light. He built a dining room under a greenhouse and installed a large bay window in the middle of the 36-foot-long living room.

Cicio's house boasts a red master bedroom (he invented this particular shade), idiosyncratic collections of everything from intaglios to hand-colored coats of arms. There is a bestiary of carved wooden deer heads, Bavarian bronze ravens, a zinc horse's head from a Parisian butcher shop, an ivory crab that Slim bequeathed him, two seventeenth-century canvases of dogs (she brought them as a gift, with instructions *not* to frame them), and one very animated two-year-old terrier named Asta after the pooch in *The Thin Man*—a nod perhaps to Slim's Hollywood days.

The first piece of furniture Cicio ever bought—from a downtown New York antiques shop in the 1960s, when he was a "kid" working at Lord & Taylor—was an English refectory

joseph cicio *the short course*

RESIDENCE *A Connecticut farmhouse that evolved, century by century, addition by addition, into an English country house.*
PROFESSION *Retail wizard, most recently chairman of I. Magnin and president of retail development for Donna Karan.*
GREATEST INFLUENCE *Slim Keith, who taught him to mix high and low.*
FAVORITE COLOR *A rich red he uses wherever he lives.*
FAVORITE RITUAL *Eating dinner by candlelight with his seven-year-old son.*
WORST DECORATING MOVE *Advising a friend to improve her house by getting a couple of bulldozers to knock it down.*
LESSON *"A room has to have humor and personality."*



To Cicio, a house is nothing if not personal, hence his many collections—intaglios, coats of arms, even antlers. On a Biedermeier table is a panoply of tortoiseshell. The fan is from the Philippines; the frames, displaying intaglios, are from Stephanie Hoppen Ltd. in London.



An inveterate haunter of auctions and flea markets, Cicio prides himself on being able to turn up an antique for every purpose



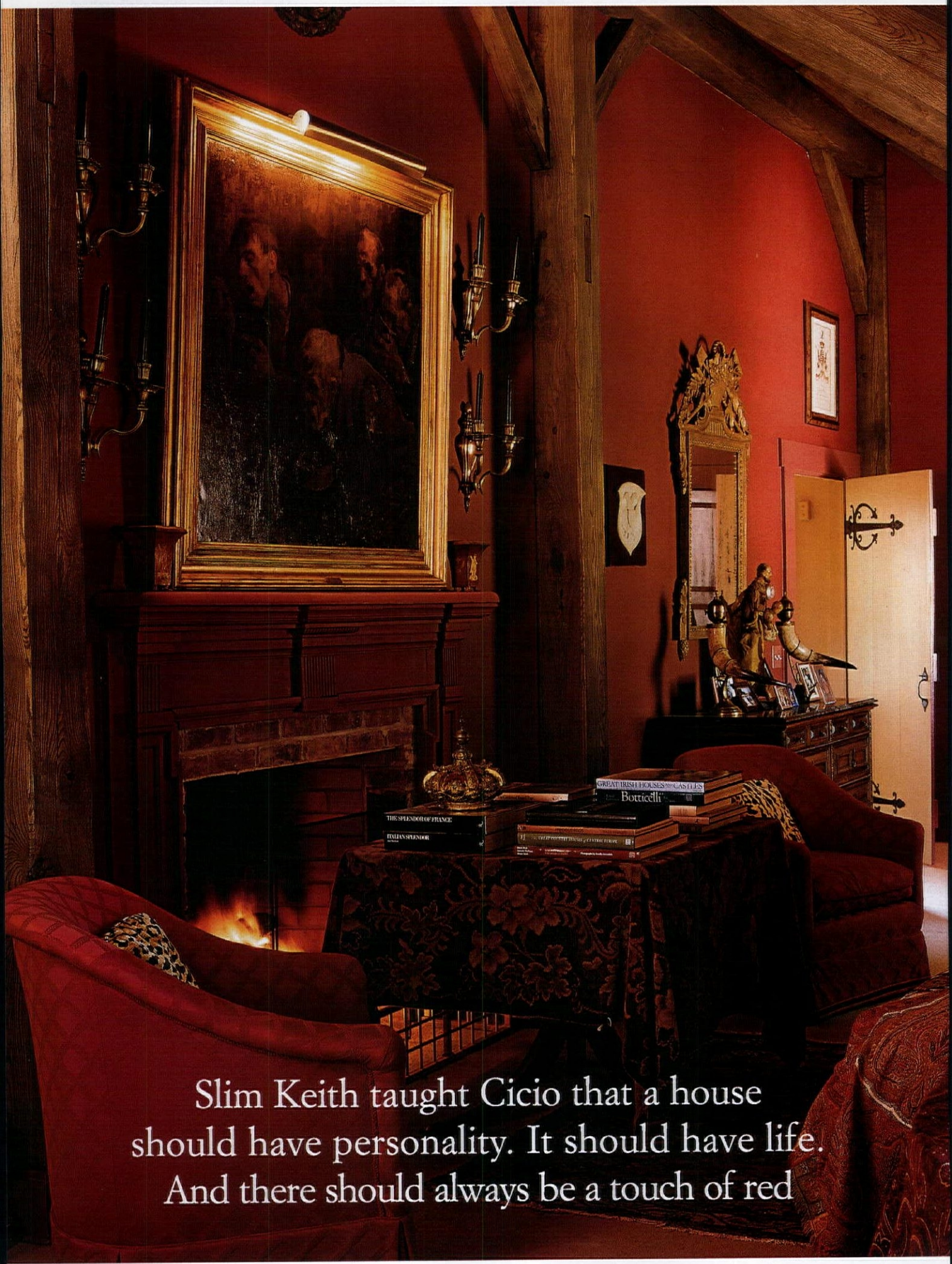
After not finding the right dining table to suit his flea-market chandelier from Paris, Cicio had one made. The Brighton Pavilion chairs came from London, the Bavarian ravens from Ed Hardy San Francisco.



Asta, the terrier, presides over the eclectic kitchen with its English refectory table—the first piece Cicio ever bought—and 18th-century ladder-back chairs from the Marché aux Puces in Paris.

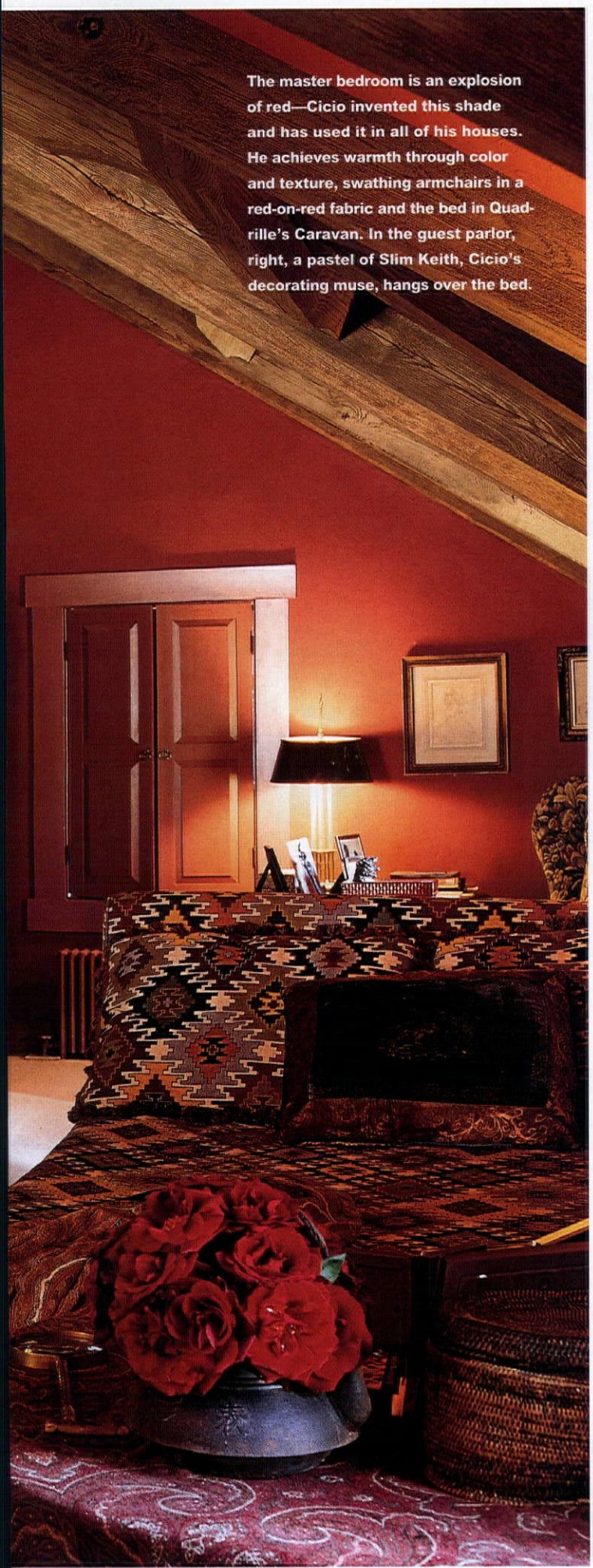
table that opens out to about twelve feet. He was smitten. "I didn't even have a house when I bought it. I was still living in my mother's hall bedroom." The table, now ensconced in the farmhouse kitchen, cost all of $250. Since then, his eclectic eye has lighted on such disparate objects as a Flemish armoire, a Scottish leather library chair, Gothic lamps from Paris, and Italian Luca Della Robbia earthenware, to mention just a few of the pieces that enliven this serene Connecticut retreat.

The house itself is a curious combination. Built in 1680, it was only one room, which became a kitchen. In 1740 that structure was moved to the hillside across the street, and a traditional saltbox was added. Around 1990, before Cicio acquired it, the house was expanded again, so that it extended farther up the hill. This addition was meant to blend in with the rest, and it did. The antique beams and wide-plank walnut floors were perfectly complementary; unfortunately, the wood was bleached, the walls were white, and the windows and doors were all in the wrong places. Cicio repainted and reconfigured, turning the original kitchen into a reading



Slim Keith taught Cicio that a house should have personality. It should have life. And there should always be a touch of red

The master bedroom is an explosion of red—Cicio invented this shade and has used it in all of his houses. He achieves warmth through color and texture, swathing armchairs in a red-on-red fabric and the bed in Quadrille's Caravan. In the guest parlor, right, a pastel of Slim Keith, Cicio's decorating muse, hangs over the bed.

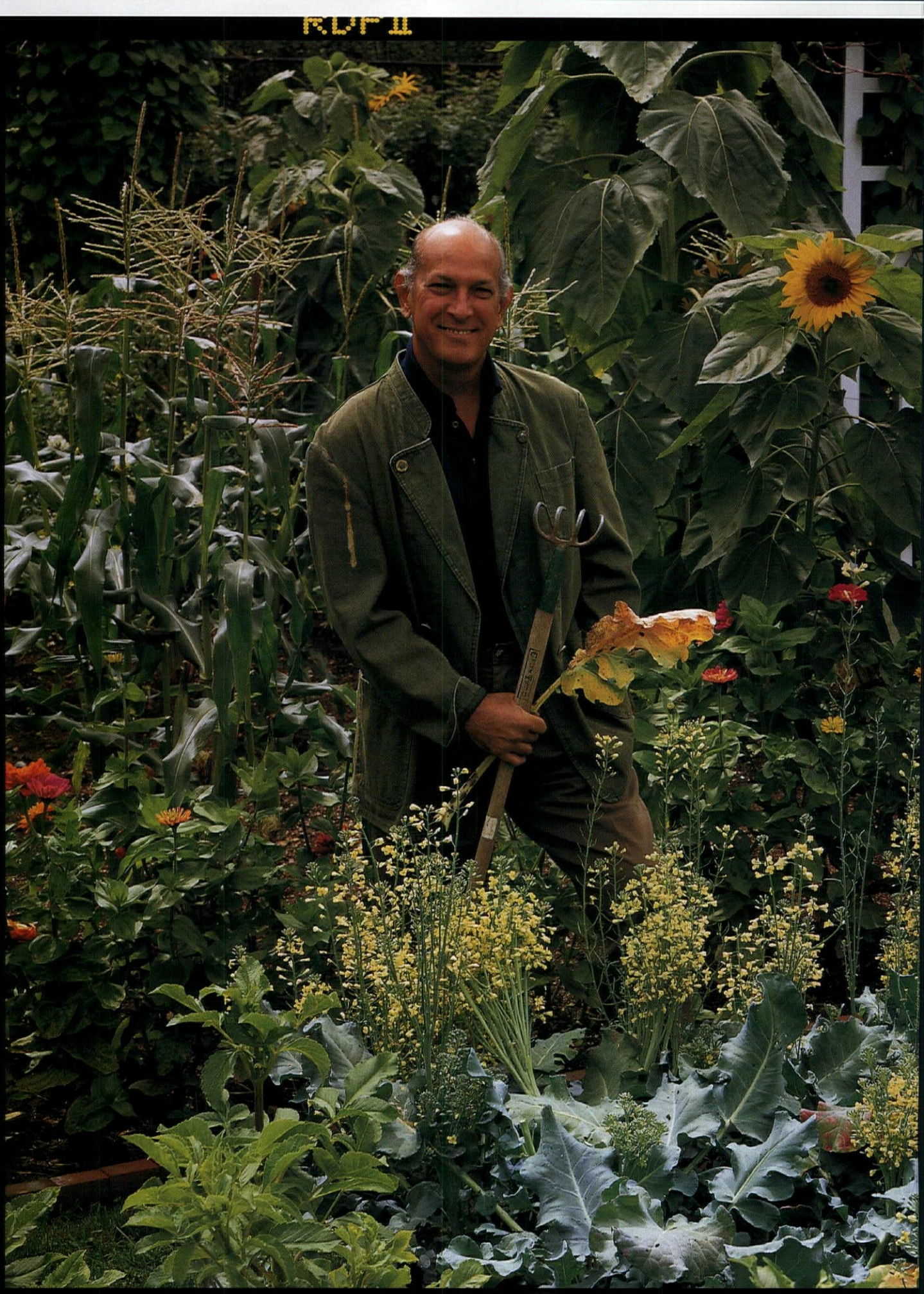




room and the living room into an ell with a large bay window overlooking a new courtyard. He added windows with antique glass, bathrooms with antique marble fixtures, a greenhouse dining room with a marble floor, and several guest rooms (including a charmer done up in toile that he calls Slim's room).

An inveterate haunter of auctions and flea markets, Cicio prides himself on being able to turn up an antique for every purpose. But he almost despaired when it came to furnishing the new dining room. He already had a French wire chandelier, foraged from a side alley of the Marché aux Puces and refitted for candles, and those dashing Bavarian ravens. But what to do about a table? "All of a sudden it hit me: 'Cicio, every antique started as a new piece of furniture. Just design something divine and have it made.' " So he conjured up a table of fancifully painted wood and had it executed by the Therian Studio Workshops, in San Francisco. On weekend nights he, his seven-year-old son (Cicio is a single father), and houseguests sit around the table on handsome Brighton Pavilion chairs and dine by candlelight.

Upstairs, in the master bedroom, Cicio took Slim at her word and fashioned a room of his own (every man should have one), with vivid red walls, red roses in a Japanese teapot, and red-on-red fabric on the barrel chairs. High up on the wall, above the brass-and-copper sconces (two are authentic, two are perfect copies) and the moody 1920s painting of a soup kitchen ("I call it *The Last Four Creative Directors at Macy's*," Cicio quips), is a small treasure he brought back from Italy, the carved wooden face of an angel. As if anyone needed two!



oscar's *thyme*

"MY FIRST SUCCESS in the garden was also my first disaster," says Oscar de la Renta in the Connecticut cutting garden he shares with his wife, Annette. "When I acquired this place about twenty-five years ago, there was nothing," recalls de la Renta, who has a brand-new perfume, So de la Renta. "I bought a book from White Flower Farm about herbaceous borders and started digging." Cut to a few seasons later: Oscar is hosting legendary gardener Russell Page. "As we approached the garden, Page said sarcastically, as only an Englishman can, 'What's that?' I was so embarrassed," he laughs. Suffice it to say, with Page as a director, the garden has been an Oscar winner ever since.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC BOMAN PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK



For Adolfo, a great room must contain great things. Two Greek stone water carriers flank his entrance. Portraits by Pieter Borselaer, top, and Pierre Mignard hang on the back of the front door.

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK AND MARK FLETCHER

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE SLESIN. PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHEL ARNAUD



Adolfo believes that books furnish a room. Those on the Louis XVI bench with its original needlepoint seat support flowers and a wooden saint's head. The fabric on the Regency chaise is Stroheim & Romann Italian damask.

Old-World Cocoon

Lucky is the man who, like Adolfo, loves what he does and where he lives

MILAN MAY HAVE its secret courtyards, Paris its hidden glass-topped arcades, but a few feet off New York City's heavily trafficked avenues are some of the most surprising and magical spaces of all. For the past twelve years, Adolfo Sardiña, the Cuban-born fashion designer known for decades simply as Adolfo, has been settled in an apartment in one of New York's most stately mansions—a Romanesque-Renaissance structure built in 1896 by coal baron Edward Berwind as his city residence. (The Elms, in Newport, Rhode Island, was Berwind's grand country house.)

From the moment Adolfo and Edward C. Perry, his companion of forty years, saw the apartment, they knew they wanted it, even though, as Adolfo says, "it did not look very well and was in great disrepair. But we saw the potential."

Adolfo and Perry, who died in 1993, soon took care of that, moving their Chinese and French antiques, as well as a remarkable collection of old-master portraits and allegorical paintings, into the duplex. They transformed the lower floor into a perfectly appointed suite with two bedrooms and a library, and decorated the baronial living room—formerly one of the mansion's reception rooms—with such grand flourishes that on first seeing it visitors are rendered speechless. "It's a winter house, it has a glow," says Adolfo modestly.

But the transformation was not done in an instant. The apartment came together slowly, as Adolfo and Perry looked, shopped, and collected. "We bought little by little, as we needed more things," Adolfo says. "We had a wonderful life," he adds. "We collected paintings here and in London. Edward died years ago, and I kept doing the same thing. But I check in with him. Often I think, *Edward would like this or that.*"

The decorating style meshes intimacy with grandeur, flamboyance with refinement. There is a kind of ornate precision, and the same exuberance and love of detail that Adolfo brought to the Chanel-inspired suits and elaborate lace evening dresses favored



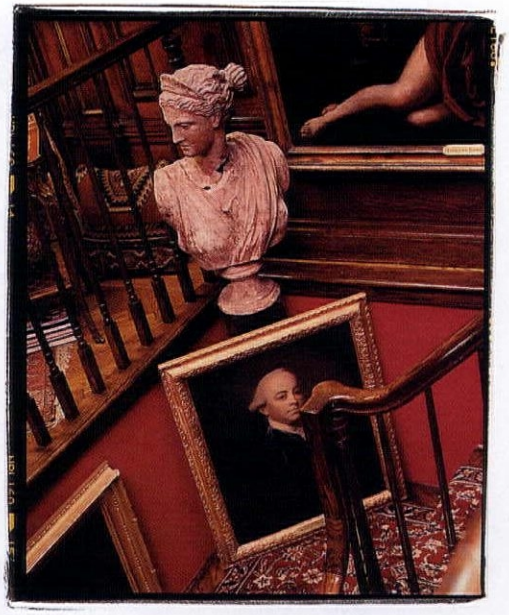
The unstinting use of opulent fabrics gives Adolfo's living room its glow. Scalamandré damask draperies hang in the windows. The two Napoleon III chairs on the left have been upholstered in a Stroheim & Romann damask.


The baronial living room is decorated
with such grand flourishes
that visitors are rendered speechless



The library, this page, is both personal and formal. The American Empire bed has a Stroheim & Romann damask canopy. The leopard-print pillow is from the Ralph Lauren Home Collection. Adolfo enlivened the library by installing a white pediment and painting the doors to the bathroom beyond it a deep shocking pink, opposite page, left. The Louis XVI chaise is covered in silk. A Greek bust and a portrait of Francis Buller by Sir Joshua Reynolds line the stairs, opposite right.





intimacy and grandeur

Adolfo's highly personal displays of paintings and books give his rooms a look that is both relaxed and precise. His use of contrasting fabrics in the same colors—a stripe and a damask, for instance—has a similar effect. To make the most of a dark space such as the library, he painted the woodwork bright white.

Adolfo
the short course

RESIDENCE *Rooms in a 19th-century mansion on New York City's Upper East Side.*
ORIGINS *Born Adolfo F. Sardiña in Cárdenas, Cuba, in 1933. He rarely uses his surname. He and Fidel Castro were contemporaries at Belen University in Havana (they never met).*
TRAINING *After leaving Cuba in 1951, Adolfo worked in Paris for a year. He then was employed as a milliner at both Bergdorf Goodman and Emme in New York City. His first store opened in New York in 1962.*
INSPIRATION *"My aunt," he says, "was a very elegant Cuban lady. I knew at a young age that I wanted to make beautiful things for beautiful women."*
CLIENTS *The Duchess of Windsor, Betsy Bloomingdale, C. Z. Guest, Gloria Vanderbilt, Babe Paley, Nancy Reagan, Carroll Petrie, Claudette Colbert.*
MOTTO *"I'm not a perfectionist. I just want it to look right; that's more than enough."*

by such clients as the Duchess of Windsor, Nancy Reagan, Babe Paley, and C. Z. Guest.

Born in 1933, Adolfo came to New York from Cuba in the early 1950s with, he says, "one suitcase, no paintings, and only memories in my mind." Maybe that explains why he has enjoyed putting together the collection of sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century French, Dutch, Italian, and English portraits of nobility that adorn the walls, lean against the stairs, hang on the back of the front door, are propped up by stacks of books and are carefully placed on the Louis XIV commodes.

More than mere decorations, the paintings seem to be treasured friends. "I like them the most," Adolfo says. "I can talk to them." Walking around the apartment, he acknowledges each of them as he might encounter an acquaintance while out on an early-evening stroll down one of Europe's great boulevards. "Delicious," he remarks, waving at *Venus Spanking Amor*, by Simon Vouet, over the fireplace; "Very pretty," he nods to the Duc de Choiseul, by Gabriel Lemonnier; "She's very beautiful, you know," he whispers of the pearl-necklaced Countess of Morton, by Anthony Van Dyck.

Although Adolfo says that "I love to read, that's my hobby," you are bound to think that arranging furniture and paintings must be an equally absorbing pastime. He has a relaxed attitude toward their display. "You just think it will look good there, and it does," he says. So, surprisingly, do the perfectly rounded but pale gray-green plants in urns and vases that appear on windowsills, antique tables, even on the floor. "Reinaldo Maia, the florist, makes them for me," Adolfo explains. "I like them when they are old and tired, so I order them and I have to be patient and wait a year for the plants to be old and tired."

Adolfo likes to lead visitors on a

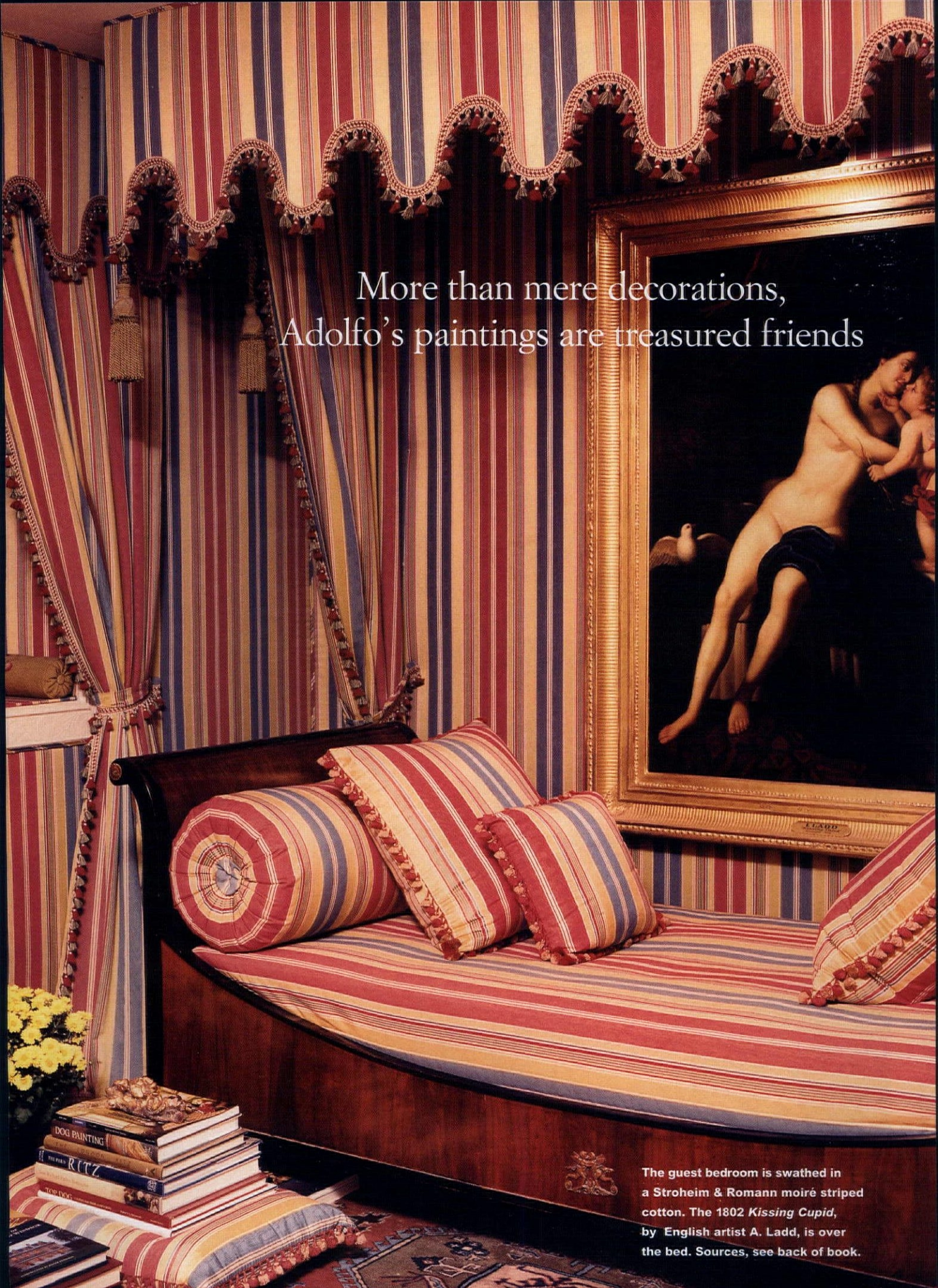
grand tour down the winding stairs to the lower level, where books fill every inch of space on shelves and on top of the cabinet in the cozy library. In this room, the theme of the paintings is horses and dogs. A portrait of a pug holds center stage. It was a gift from the Duchess of Windsor, says Adolfo, who used to have two pugs himself.

The two bedrooms are tailored and precisely decorated. In the master bedroom, a painting of Hercules by Benedetto Luti that came from Rudolf Nureyev's collection in Paris stands on an easel. And over the Italian Empire bed, against its richly striped damask, hangs a portrait of Lucrezia Borgia, the Duchess of Ferrara. "See," says Adolfo, pointing to the painting, "she has her poison there. But I sleep very well."

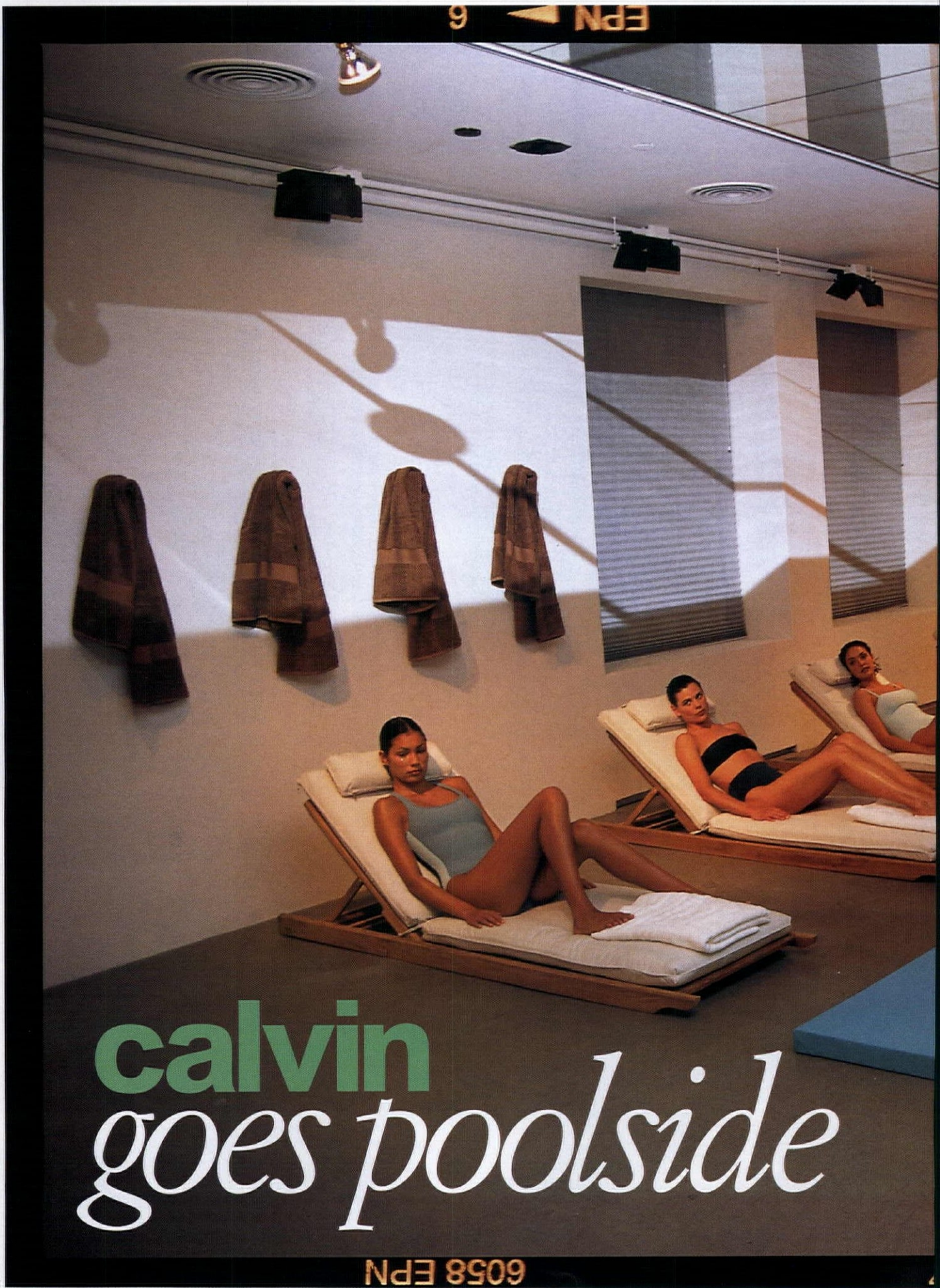
A sense of humor lies behind many of the apartment's details. When Adolfo acquired the pair of Greek stone water carriers that now flank the entrance of his great room, he didn't like the fact that they were identical. So, he says with a smile, "I broke one of the figures' arms. I didn't want them to be the same." And what has he done with the severed limb? "I probably have it in a drawer somewhere," he says. "That's just in case I ever want to put it back."

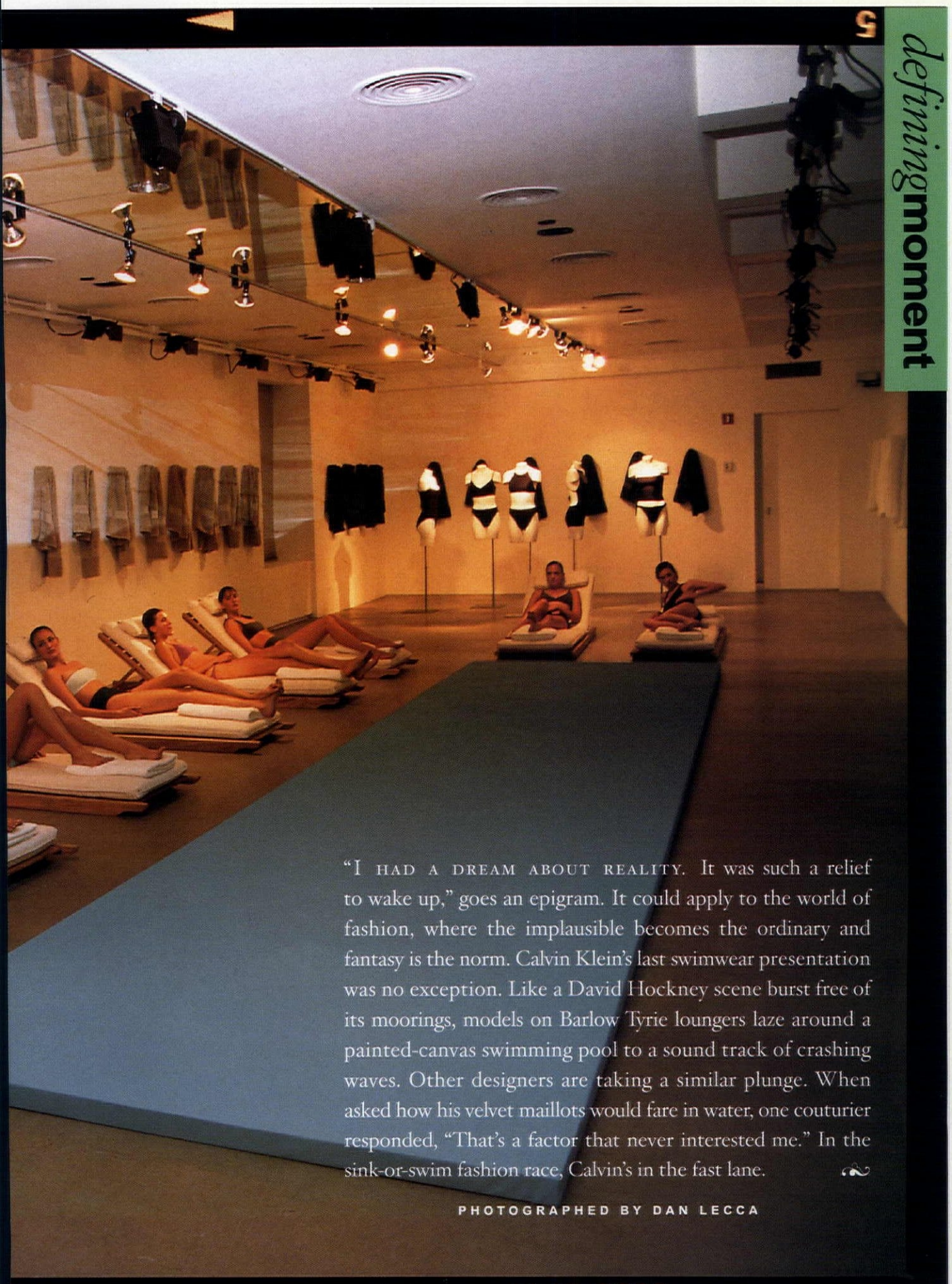


In the master bedroom, a Stroheim & Romann fabric is used on the walls and the bed. *Madame l'Estrange*, by Jeremiah Baratt, an 18th-century Irish painter, is over the fireplace.



The guest bedroom is swathed in a Stroheim & Romann moiré striped cotton. The 1802 *Kissing Cupid*, by English artist A. Ladd, is over the bed. Sources, see back of book.


calvin
goes poolside



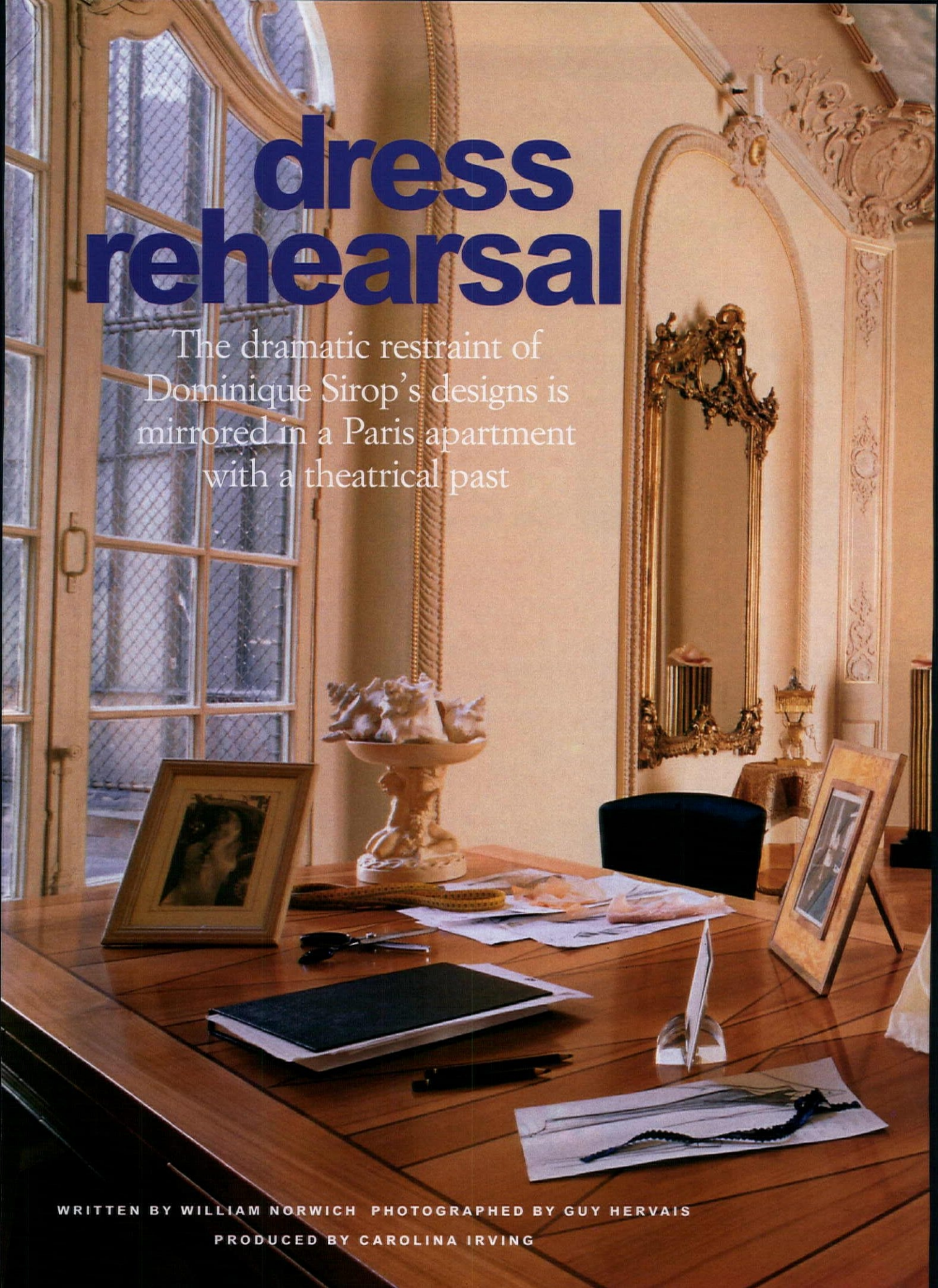
"I HAD A DREAM ABOUT REALITY. It was such a relief to wake up," goes an epigram. It could apply to the world of fashion, where the implausible becomes the ordinary and fantasy is the norm. Calvin Klein's last swimwear presentation was no exception. Like a David Hockney scene burst free of its moorings, models on Barlow Tyrie loungers laze around a painted-canvas swimming pool to a sound track of crashing waves. Other designers are taking a similar plunge. When asked how his velvet maillots would fare in water, one couturier responded, "That's a factor that never interested me." In the sink-or-swim fashion race, Calvin's in the fast lane.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAN LECCA

6058 EPN

dress rehearsal

The dramatic restraint of Dominique Sirop's designs is mirrored in a Paris apartment with a theatrical past



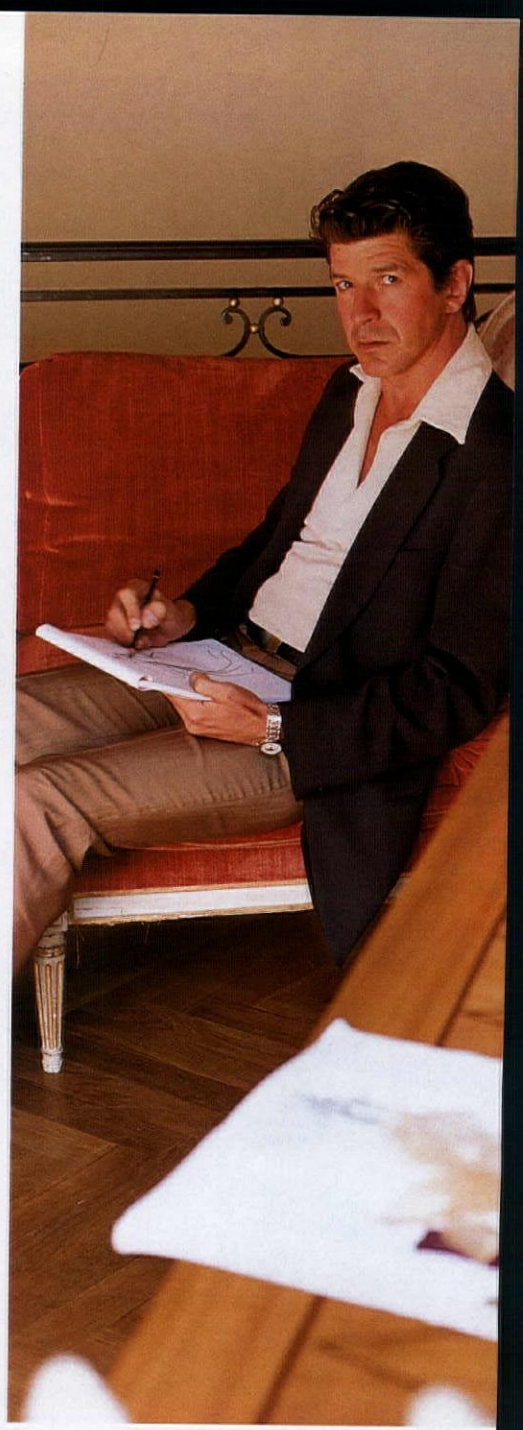
WRITTEN BY WILLIAM NORWICH PHOTOGRAPHED BY GUY HERVAIS

PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING



Sirop lets the lines of his clothes and of his studio speak for themselves: quality and restraint are all. The 1940s sycamore table is by Jacques Adnet. The gilt-wood mirror is from a château in the Loire. The Directoire-style chaise is covered in a coral velvet.





The quiet elegance of Sirop, center, made him a perfect designer for Audrey Hepburn, whose photograph rests in his studio, above. The tablecloth in the bedroom, far right, is a reproduction of an 18th-century tapestry. The Japanese vase was found at an antiques store in Kyoto.

ON ONE OF THOSE SEASHELL-BLUE afternoons for which Paris is famous, two years ago, couturier Dominique Sirop went for a fateful stroll in Pigalle, near Montmartre.

Sirop, who for more than a decade was right hand to Hubert de Givenchy, until Givenchy's retirement in 1995, was apartment-hunting. That afternoon, the flat he went to see in Pigalle didn't please him much. But farther along the sloping street, he was transfixed. "I walked toward an open door and realized it was this beautiful theater. It was not in spectacular shape. The concierge said there was no chance the theater was for sale, but living and producing my fashion in a theater was a dream I'd always had."

When he returned to his apartment, near the rue St. Honoré, Sirop telephoned his mother and told her about the theater. She knew the place. "It's full of history," Sirop explains. "Built at the end of the nineteenth century, in 1910 it became famous as the home of the Free Theater." Sirop's mother offered to help him buy the theater if it was ever for sale. With that as inspiration, he found that it could be his.

What followed was a time of considerable change in the designer's life. Before Givenchy retired from the couture house he had established in 1952, he reportedly campaigned for Sirop to take over his business. But Bernard Arnault, who presides over the company that owns Givenchy, had other ideas.

Dominique Sirop quietly struck out on his own. As he assembled his design team, he launched an extensive renovation of the theater in Pigalle, which is now both his home and his atelier, a setting for his twice-yearly fashion shows. If





other designers pushed fashion hype to the max this past July, Sirop offered a collection that was "smooth, chic, and perfectly charming," according to *WWD*. In other words, uncomplicated designs with luxury in the construction rather than in the trim. Sirop says he approached decorating in the same spirit. "I didn't have a great inspiration for how to decorate the house, because I believe the architecture *is* its decor. Upstairs is like a chapel; downstairs the mood is more Art Deco. There are two receiving rooms. The room with the blue screen is linear and austere. The other room is more rococo. And I feel these two rooms correspond to what I do in fashion. Meaning that if you look at what I do, there is one side that is pure, but the fantasy is there, too."

For Sirop, the "harmony of richness and simplicity, and texture and light" is the essence of fashion *and* interior design.

dominique sirop *the short course*

RESIDENCE *A restored 19th-century theater, former home of the Free Theater, in Pigalle.*

PEDIGREE *Designer and First Assistant to Hubert de Givenchy for more than a decade before starting his own label.*

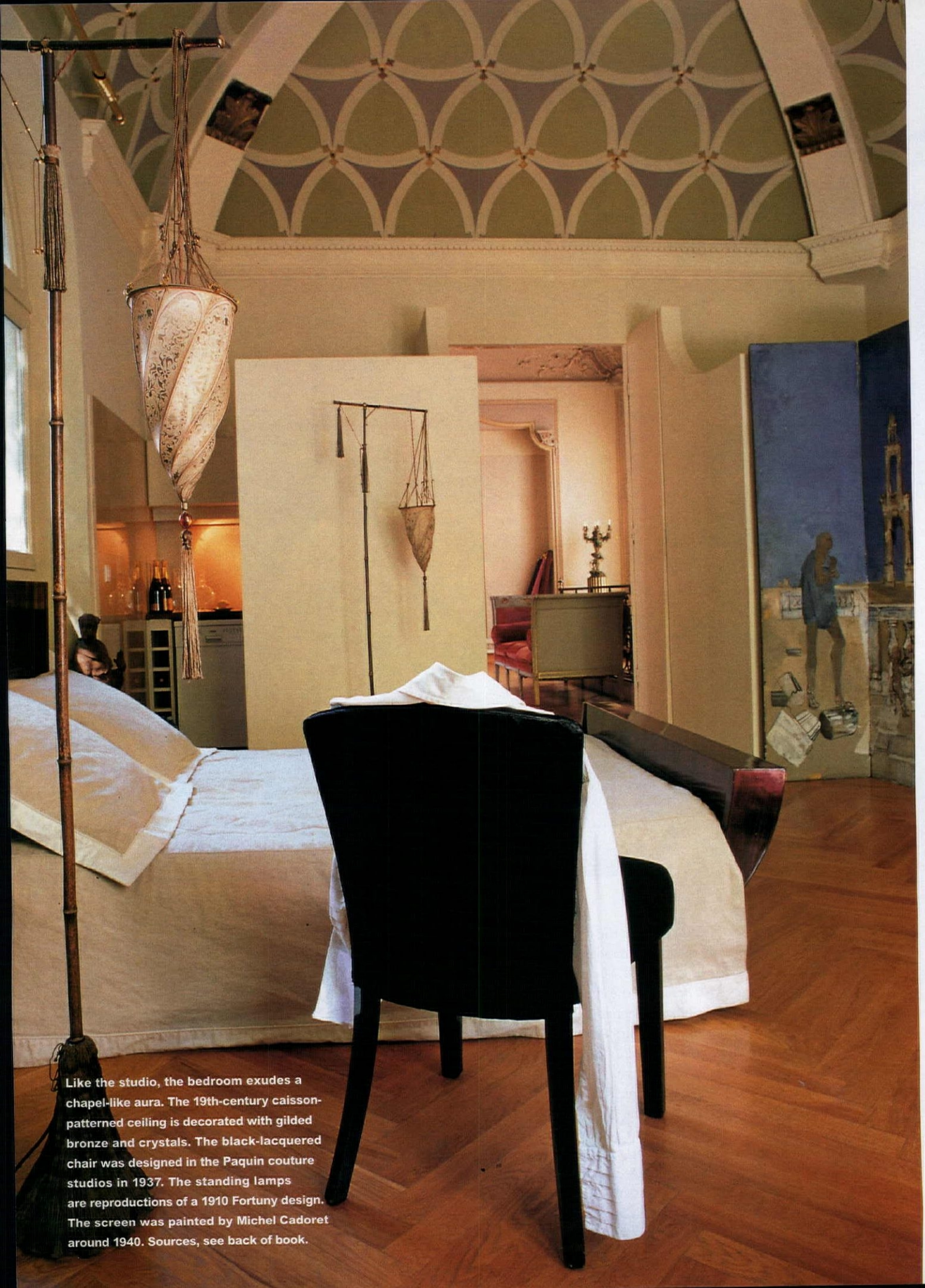
CLIENTS *Nan Kempner, Joan Collins, Helene David-Weill.*

GREATEST HIT *A sky-blue suit with a long jacket and pants.*

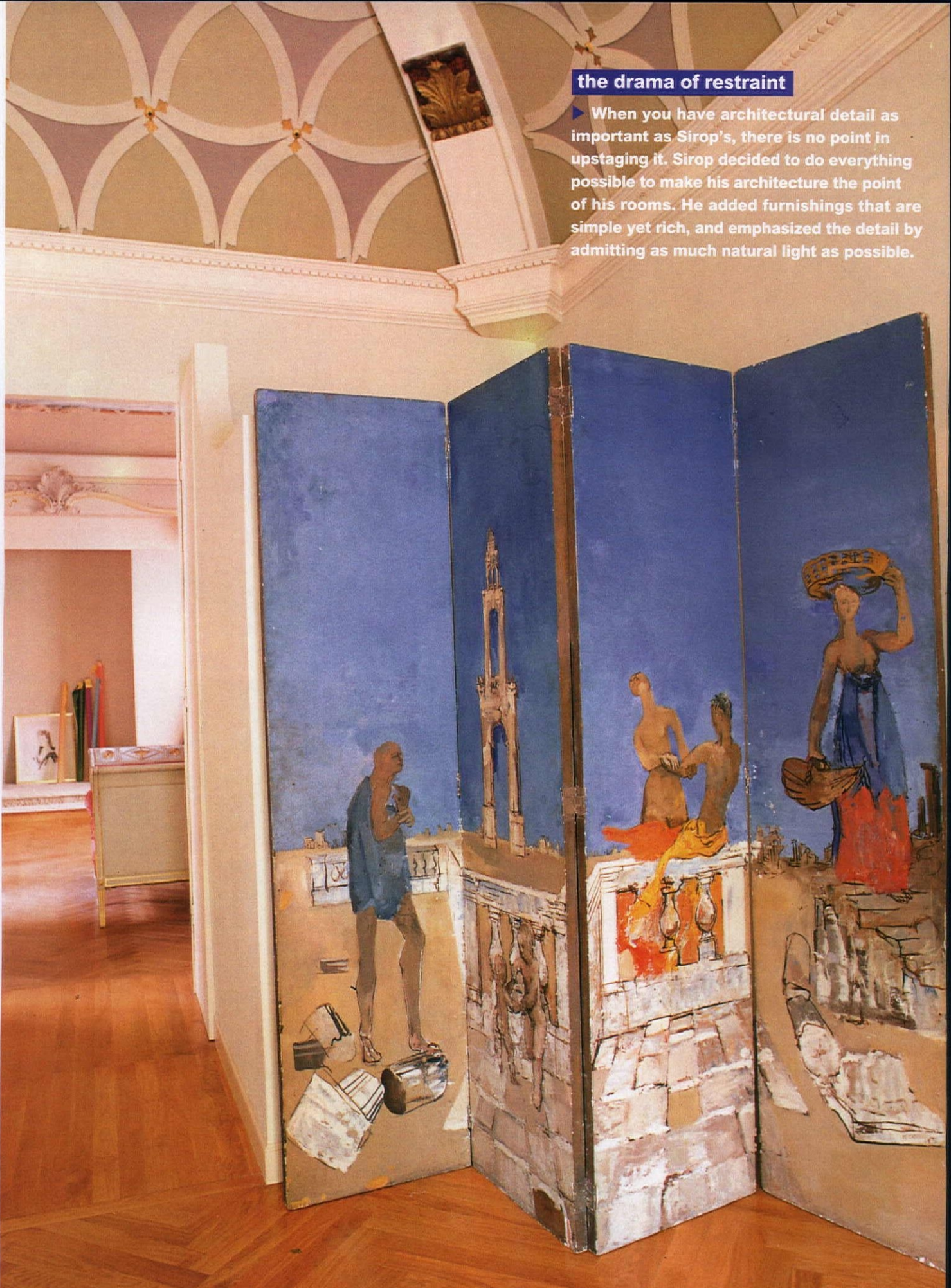
DESIGN PRINCIPLE *"Simplicity above everything."*

FUTURE PROJECT *"To work in America. In France everybody is too oriented toward the past. I love America because everything is new. The mind-set is very open toward the spirit of the future."*

PLAY HE WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE PERFORMED IN HIS THEATER/HOUSE *Roman Polanski's* Master Class.



Like the studio, the bedroom exudes a chapel-like aura. The 19th-century caisson-patterned ceiling is decorated with gilded bronze and crystals. The black-lacquered chair was designed in the Paquin couture studios in 1937. The standing lamps are reproductions of a 1910 Fortuny design. The screen was painted by Michel Cadoret around 1940. Sources, see back of book.



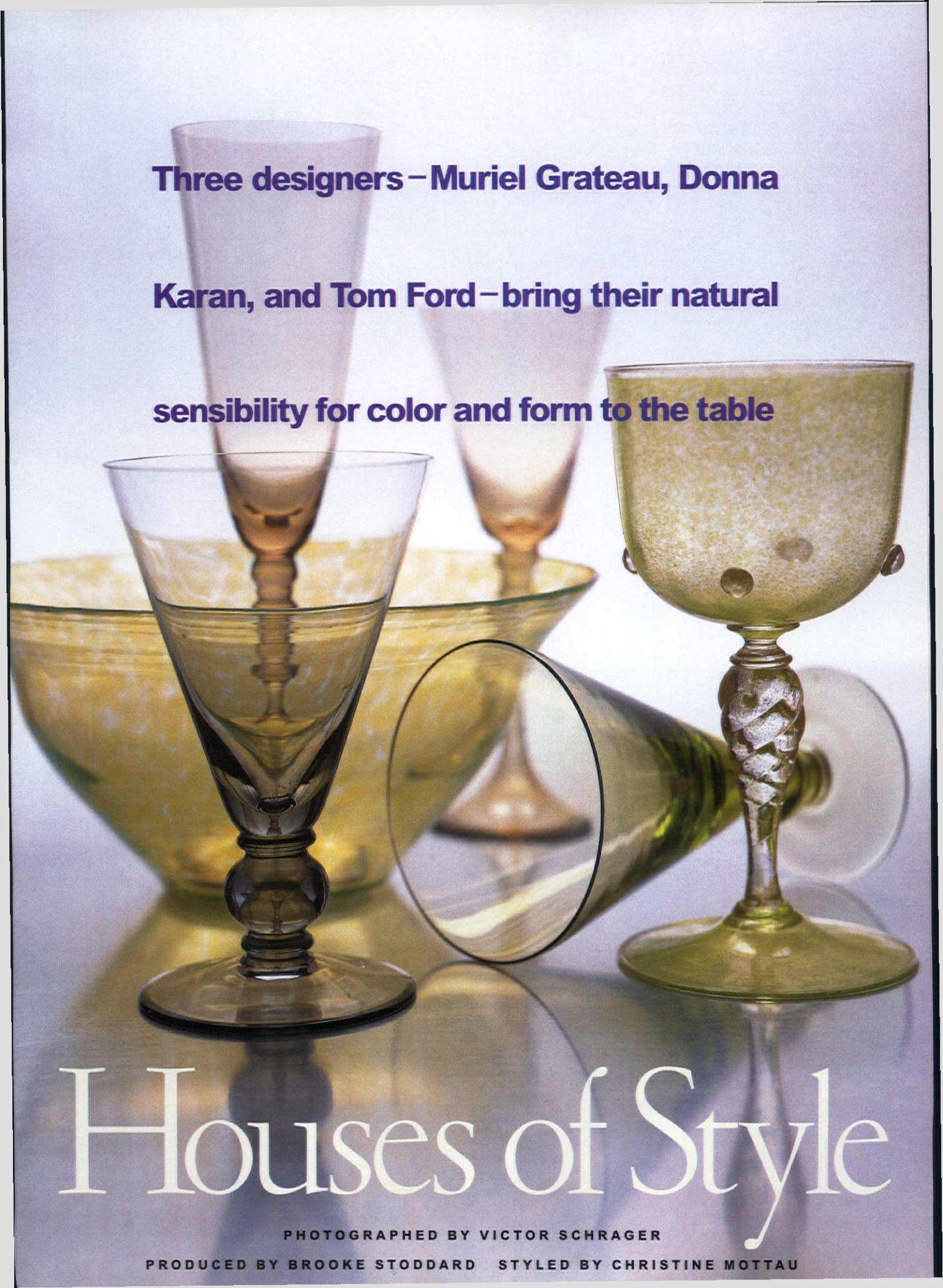
the drama of restraint

▶ When you have architectural detail as important as Sirop's, there is no point in upstaging it. Sirop decided to do everything possible to make his architecture the point of his rooms. He added furnishings that are simple yet rich, and emphasized the detail by admitting as much natural light as possible.

"I created these things by playing with old objects—Chinese ceramics, Venetian glass—and changing their colors" —MURIEL GRATEAU



Grateau has always been a superb colorist, in both the fashions she once designed in Italy and the tableware and linens she now creates in Paris (see article, page 118). Her line includes, this page: Isola wineglass, $68; faience bowl, $37, and plate, $79; glass dessert plate, $50; and damask napkins, $33 each. All available from Belvedere, Chicago. Grateau's serving sets, $380, from Tiny Jewel Box, Washington, D.C. Opposite page: Grateau's Venezia champagne flute, $99, and wineglass, $99; Isola water glasses, $68 each; and serving bowl, $99, all from Belvedere. Grande Venise wineglass, $380, from Muriel Grateau, Paris.



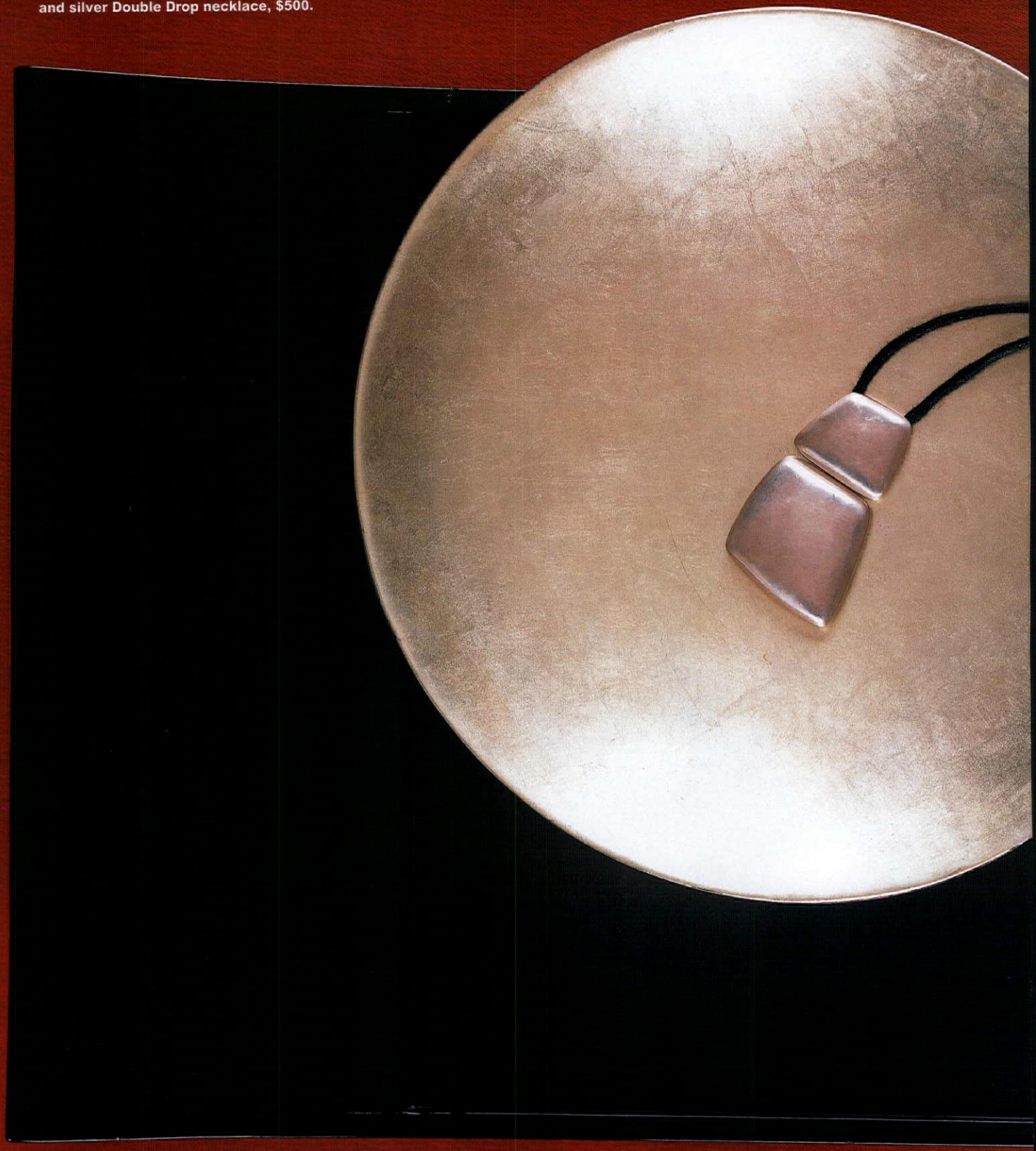
Three designers – Muriel Grateau, Donna Karan, and Tom Ford – bring their natural sensibility for color and form to the table

Houses of Style

PHOTOGRAPHED BY VICTOR SCHRAGER

PRODUCED BY BROOKE STODDARD STYLED BY CHRISTINE MOTTAU

Donna Karan's home collection reflects her passion for rich materials and color. Laid out on a red silk-and-pashmina throw, $800, are her ebonized wood East-West tray, $485; metallic lacquered Sundish, $155; and silver Double Drop necklace, $500.



"A trip to Bali and Thailand inspired these pieces. They are designed to be sensual, not minimal" —DONNA KARAN



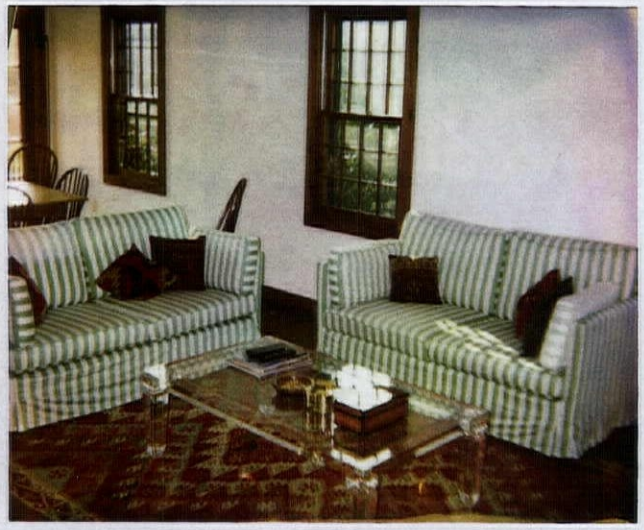


With his first home collection for Gucci, head designer Tom Ford says his goal is to create new classics that are "identifiable as Gucci without any signature—no horse bits or *G*s on anything." Crystal bottle with sterling stopper, $930; sterling Irregular pitcher, $1,950; Abstract Triangular bottle opener, $295; and coaster, $230.

"My designs come from the house.
I go through my own home, take old items, and change, stretch, remake them" —TOM FORD



Ford explores reflective materials such as glass and sterling silver in his tableware. From left: Sterling whiskey measure, $225; sterling-and-ebony-handled bar set, $495; shot glass, $240 for a set of four; sterling Egg saltshaker, $390 with pepper shaker; and Thumbprint beaker, $550. See Sources, back of book.



LIVING ROOM ON VALIUM.



LIVING ROOM ON PROZAC.

DOES

isaac mizrahi

The ebullient designer unzips his new country

HERE'S THE THING: a little white paint goes a long way. That's the story. Because please don't think that this is my dream house or my perfect hideaway, although I'm very happy with it—for now. This house is a little summer rental that I bought so I wouldn't have to keep finding a new rental every summer.

For, like, fifteen years I've been renting a house in the summer by the beach on eastern Long Island. Why the Hamptons, instead of, like, bucolic, country-squire, Oscar de la Renta Connecticut? Because I know how to drive here. That's the direction my car goes. The first summer I rented was with about seventy-five people in Bellport. It was a tiny, tiny little room basically. The next summer house was this old Victorian in Bridgehampton with a big, big, big backyard. It was fantastic, and it was really tawdry. In August, moss started growing in the living room. It was scary. We had to get cleaning things and clean, which we didn't know how to do, of course.

There was the summer rental in Water Mill with the kidney-shaped pool, and another house in Bridgehampton that actually was perfect for me, except that it was right on the train tracks. Here was the house; there was the train. Right there. I'm not a good sleeper. Just knowing the train was coming, I couldn't sleep. So I never slept, but otherwise the house was perfect, and it was for sale. But I thought, *Why buy a house where I can't sleep?* Right? So somebody else bought it, and I rented the house from them for another summer. Anyway, I kept telling the real-estate broker who always found me my rentals to find me something I could afford, so I wouldn't have to look for a new house every summer. Last winter we found this: voilà! It has tiny little rooms, three little bedrooms upstairs and one downstairs we're turning into a den, and a little kitchenette that I was going to redo, but you know what? I'm not redoing anything. I decided I'm not doing a thing to this house. Not a thing. People keep saying, "You've got to get a Sub-Zero everything," and I think, *I can't*. This is just a nice

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY ISAAC MIZRAHI

PRODUCED BY WILLIAM NORWICH PORTRAIT BY ERIC BOMAN



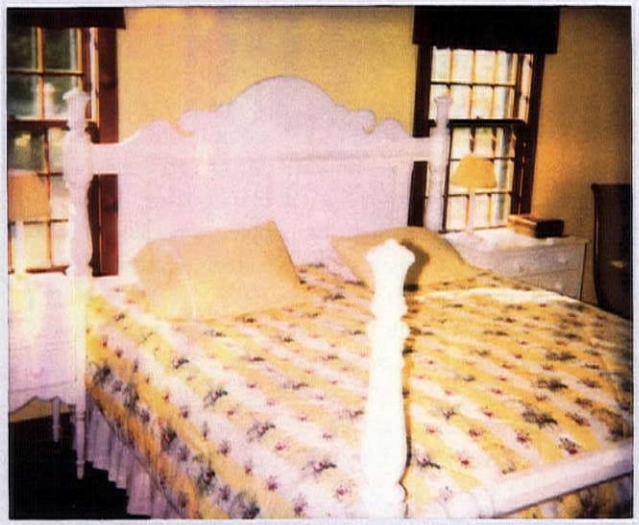
BACK OF HOUSE, WINTER.
BR-R-R.



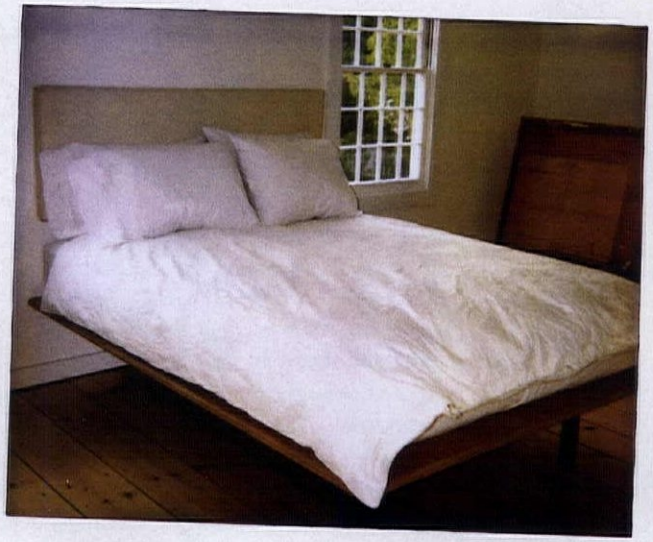
BACK OF HOUSE, SPRING.
AH!

before and after

house and offers his fashion and decorating tips



OLD QUEEN



DESIGN QUEEN

"Making clothes and decorating are a lot like cooking. Prepare. Prepare. Prepare" —ISAAC MIZRAHI

little summer rental. A pretty little 1972 saltbox. Because, you know what, it's not like I'm Donna Karan or Barbra Streisand or Ronald Perlman or someone who buys a new house every second and gets—who?—Renzo Mongiardino to decorate it. And then says, "That doorknob is making me crazy. Change it." This house isn't that kind of place. Besides, sometimes when things are too done, when the proportions of things are too perfect, it's just a monument. It feels like a hotel lobby. I'm not a minimalist, and I'm not a maximalist either. My apartment in New York is small. I did it with the designer Ross Anderson. For me, it is perfect. Every single surface is thought out. Not lavish, but everything we did solved a problem. Whereas I wanted this place to be a bit funkier. Originally, there was all this horrible brown woodwork inside, and weird trim outside on the house. I painted it all white. I can't bring myself to do a lot of color. Color is distracting. I can't commit to it. If I do, I bore of it very easily. I do a lot of color in my clothing collections, however. For women, color is a luxury. It's also one thing to commit to a particular blue or pink or whatever for a cashmere sweater. It's another thing to commit to blue for a sofa. If I had millions of rooms, I imagine in some I'd use color.



THE DOORS IN THE HOUSE WERE HORRIBLE. But paint them white and it's heaven. Really cute. Stripped the floors. Extremely knotty pine. My bed is a plywood slab I designed with this little headboard, because I read a lot in bed. I sleep on a mattress, a Sealy Posturpedic extra-firm, queen-size mattress, thank you, not a futon. I'm not the futon type. Almost everything else bought is from a junk shop. There are a lot of really good junk shops in America, especially Chicago. You could just point there. Face the wind and follow the scent, but I'm not going to name the shops. I don't want anyone to buy them out. Sorry. For the bathrooms, I got these really good medicine cabinets from a medical supply store, and shelves from IKEA.

I wanted window shades that were like brown paper bags. I just found someone who can make them, laminate the paper, and put them on rolls you can pull. Because otherwise you spend, like, $3,000 and you rip it and it's gone. Actually, $1,000 seems to be the magic number for this house. Everything I want to buy or do, when I ask, the answer is a thousand dollars. $1,000 for the chair. $1,000 for the sofa. $1,000 for the piano. Cigarette holder? $1,000. Cigarettes? $1,000. Water, Mr. Mizrahi? $1,000. What you learn by decorating houses, and what you learn by designing clothes, is to be really honest about what you want to do. My only real advice for decorating is, Do what you like. Learn to eliminate what you don't like, or you're going to become unhappy and upset. And I think this also defines what style is. People are always asking Isabella Rossellini how to dress stylishly, and she tells them, "Just wear what you like to wear." That's great advice.

But I compare everything to cooking. Making clothes and decorating are a lot like cooking. Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. You're delighting people, hopefully. You're fulfilling yourself. Okay, I'm not Rem Koolhaas. I know he isn't looking at interior design this way.

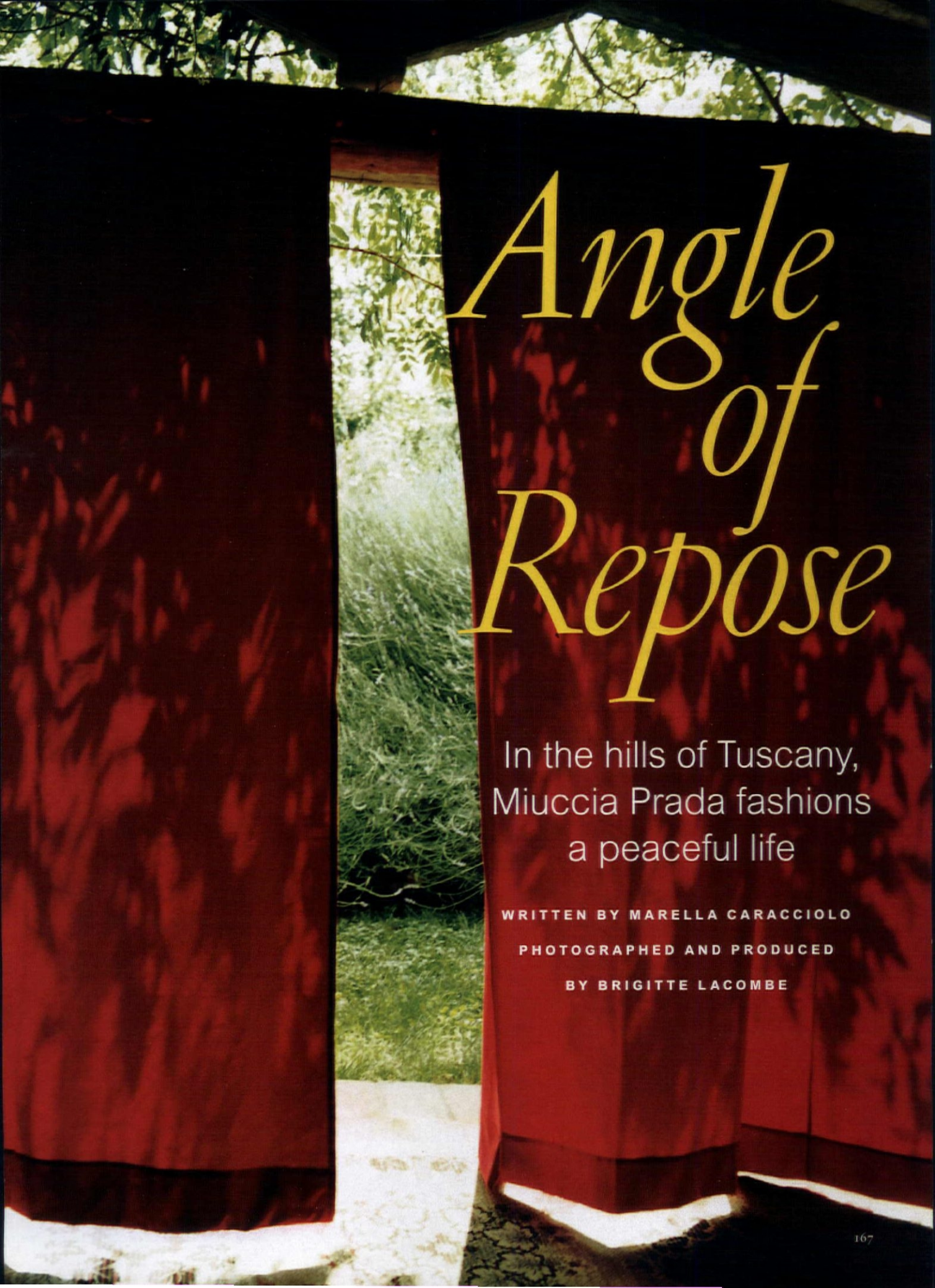
If a house expresses your life, then it's a big success. Like Lisa Eisner's house in L.A., or Kitty Carlisle Hart's apartment in Manhattan. These places weren't done. They were accomplished over many years, and they are regionally right. When I can't sleep, which is a lot, I decorate imaginary rooms in my mind. Someday, my legacy will be one great residence, like Elsie de Wolfe's Villa Trianon. Maybe; I hope. I'm fascinated by the sort of people from the '20s and '30s you read about or see pictures of, like English ladies working in their gardens to perfect that perfect rose. Or—I don't know—make a perfect cup of coffee. That was the mystery of their lives.

For now, a little white paint goes a long way.





When she and her husband began restoring the 17th-century hospice, Prada, below, wanted to make as few changes as possible. One of the garden's rooms, opposite page, is a converted pigsty. The fabric is a thick cotton from Ghidoli in Milan.



Angle of Repose

In the hills of Tuscany, Miuccia Prada fashions a peaceful life

WRITTEN BY MARELLA CARACCIOLO

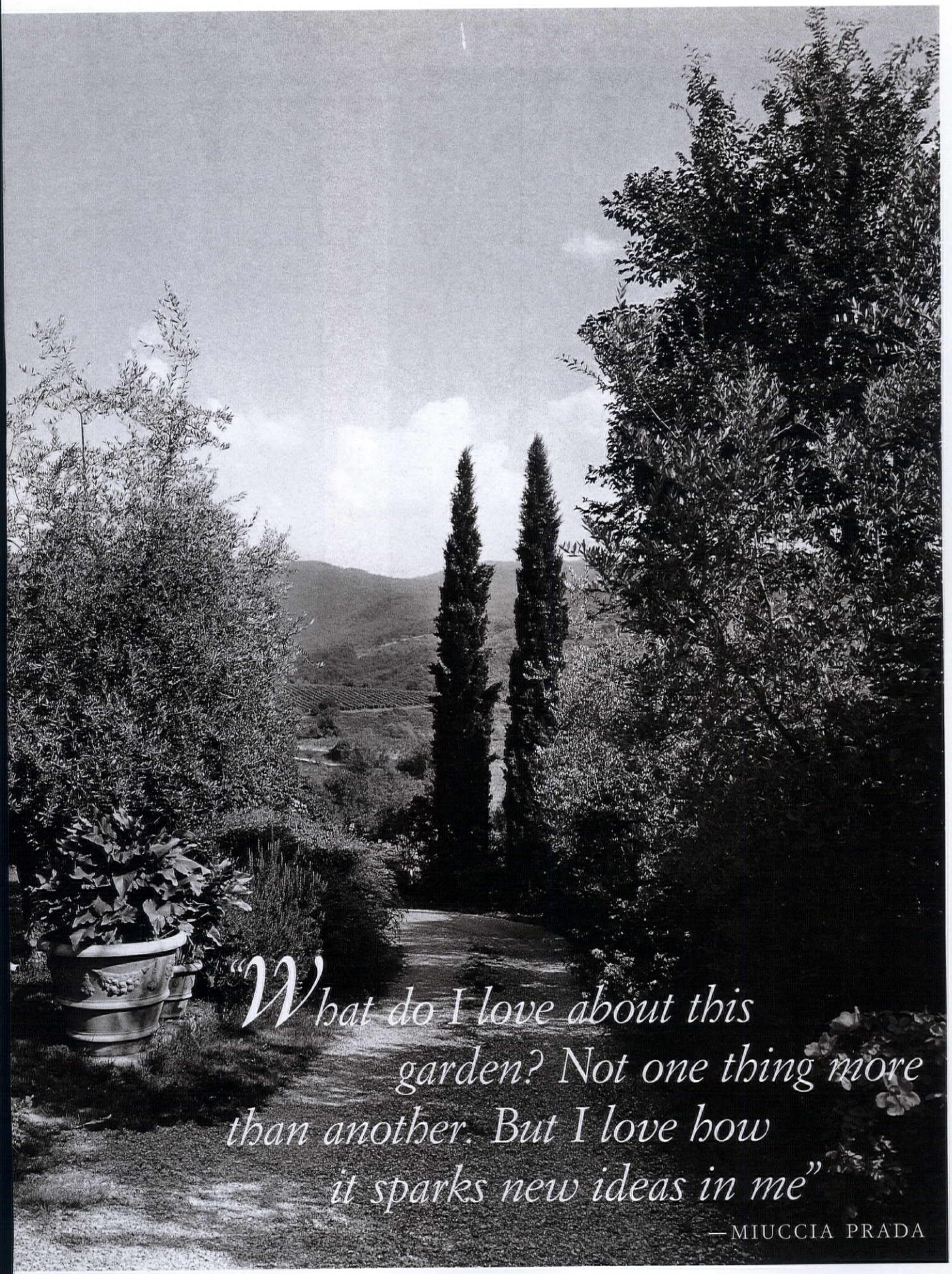
PHOTOGRAPHED AND PRODUCED BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE



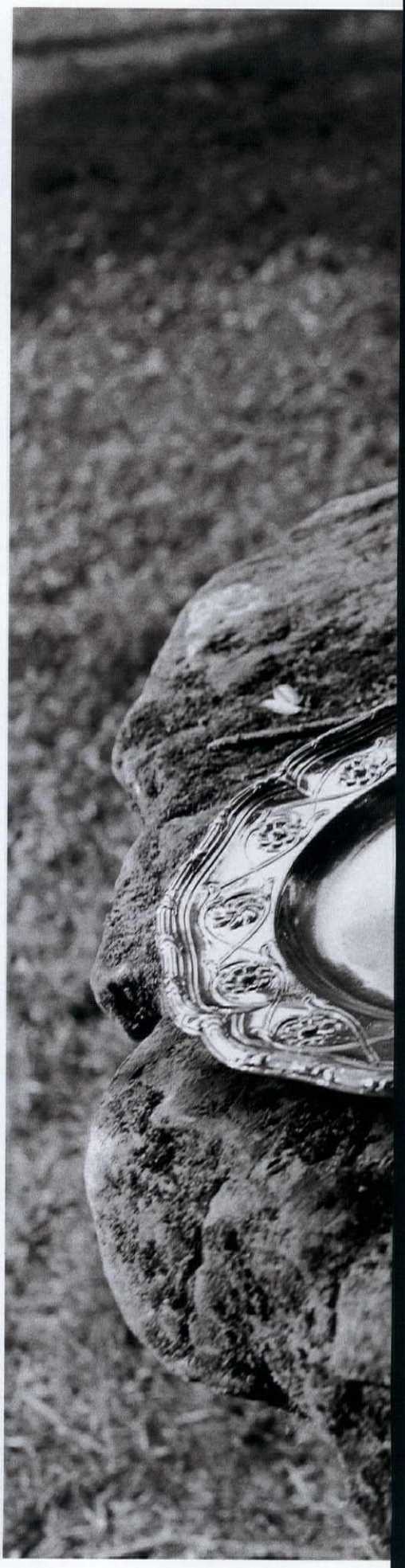


Prada says that neither she nor her husband feels the need to live in a "finished" home and so their building looks much as it did in the 17th century. The path leading to the main entrance, opposite page, is bordered by olive trees, cypress, and lavender.

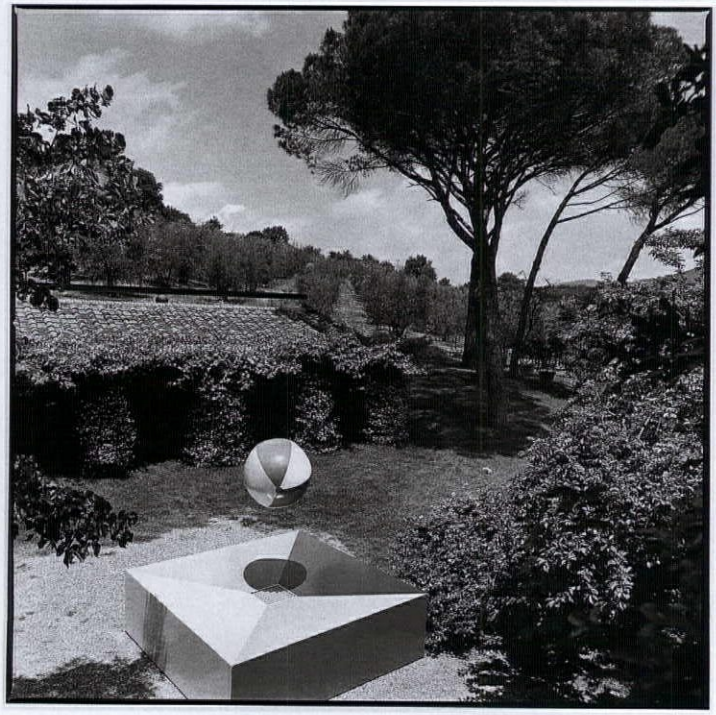
WHEN YOU ASK MIUCCIA PRADA about fashion, you can't get her to talk. But ask her about her garden and the results are more rewarding. "Creating a garden, watching it change and grow, is about working with personal memories and creating something intimate," she says in discussing the seventeenth-century hospice in Tuscany that she and her husband, Patrizio Bertelli, bought some ten years ago. Intimacy, according to Prada, involves freedom from ostentation. "I want to live in an unfinished environment which sparks my imagination and welcomes change." This garden, where contemporary artworks and artful installations find their places within a sober rural framework, does just that.

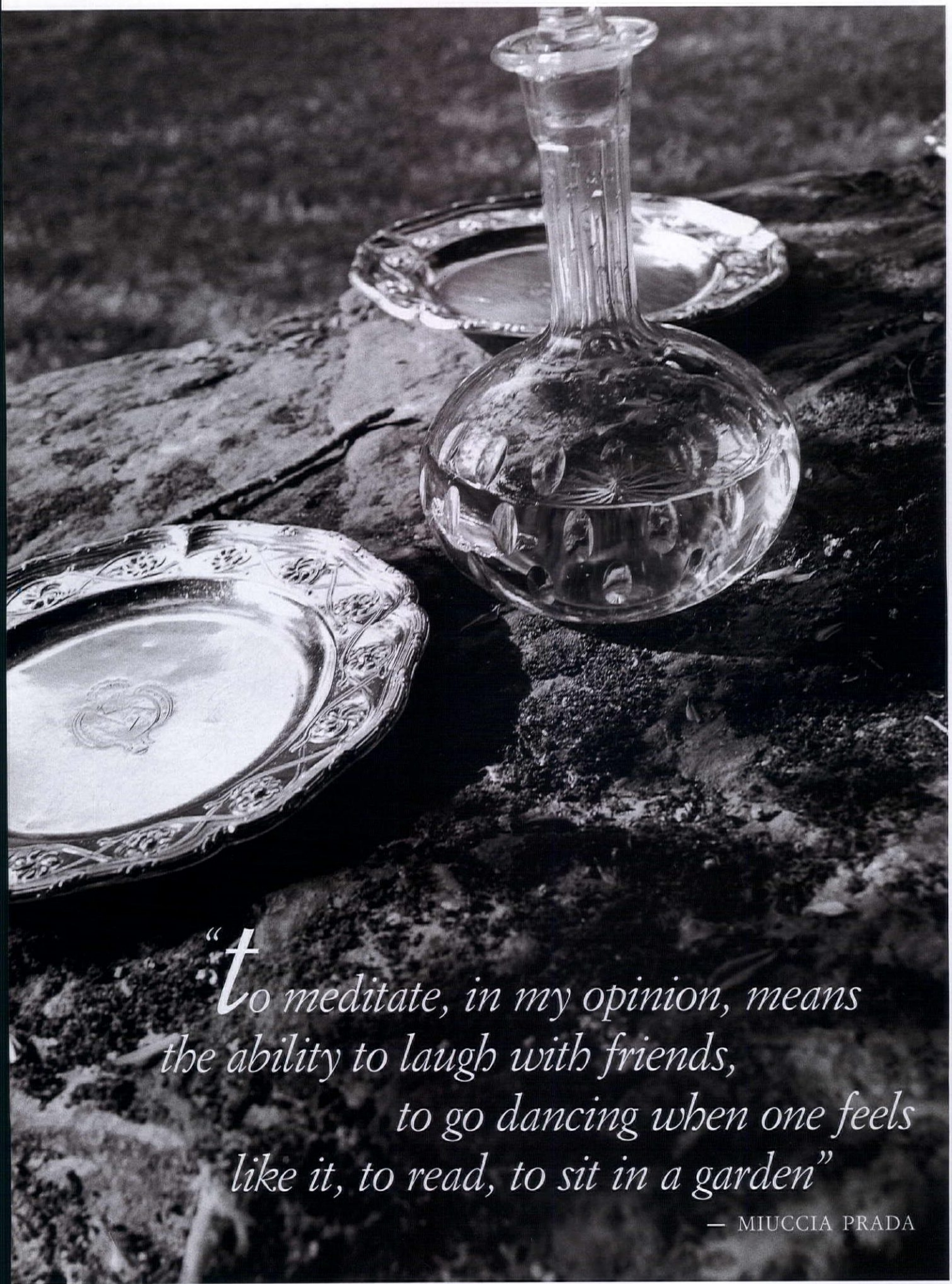

"What do I love about this
garden? Not one thing more
than another. But I love how
it sparks new ideas in me"
—MIUCCIA PRADA

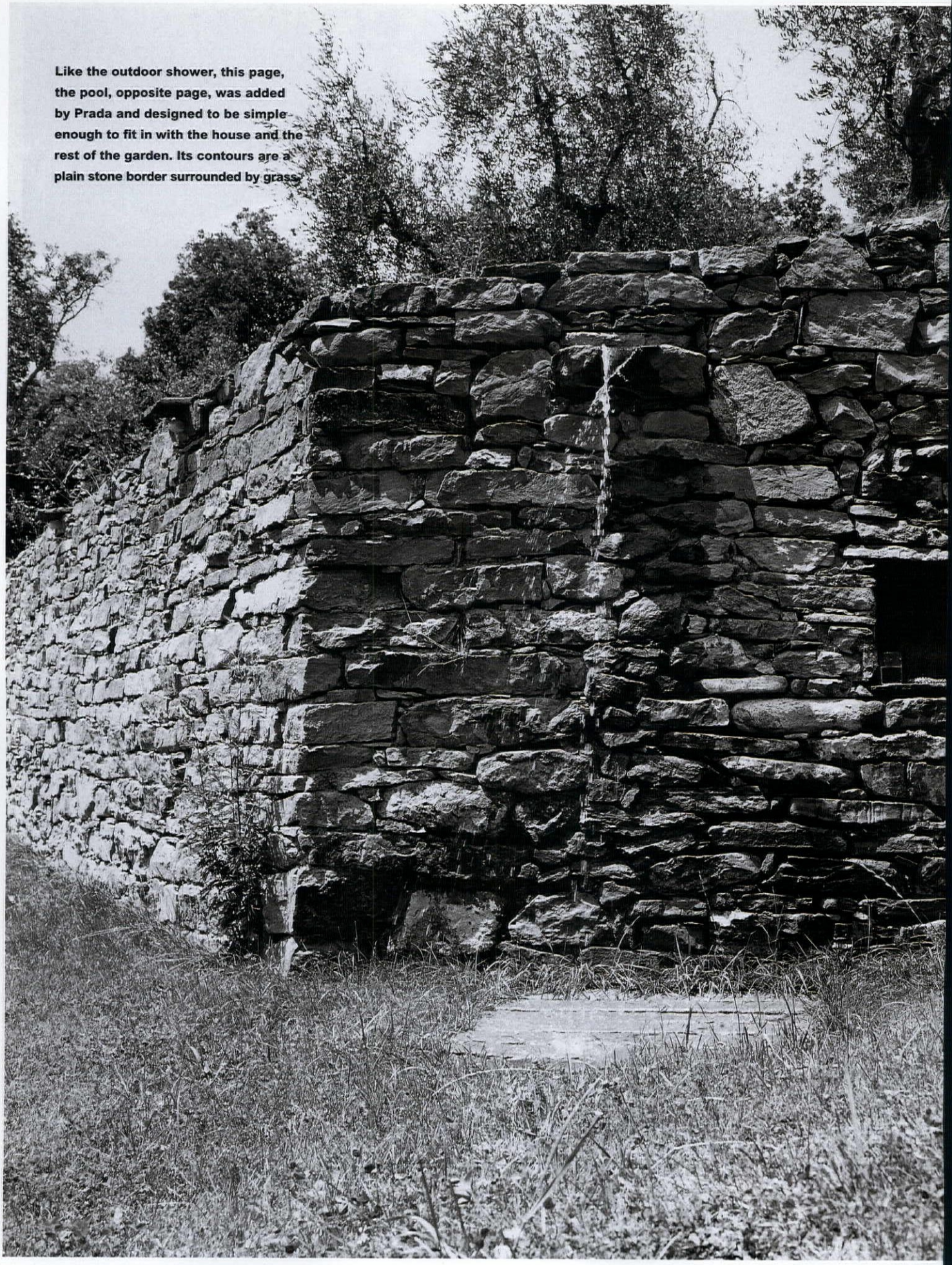




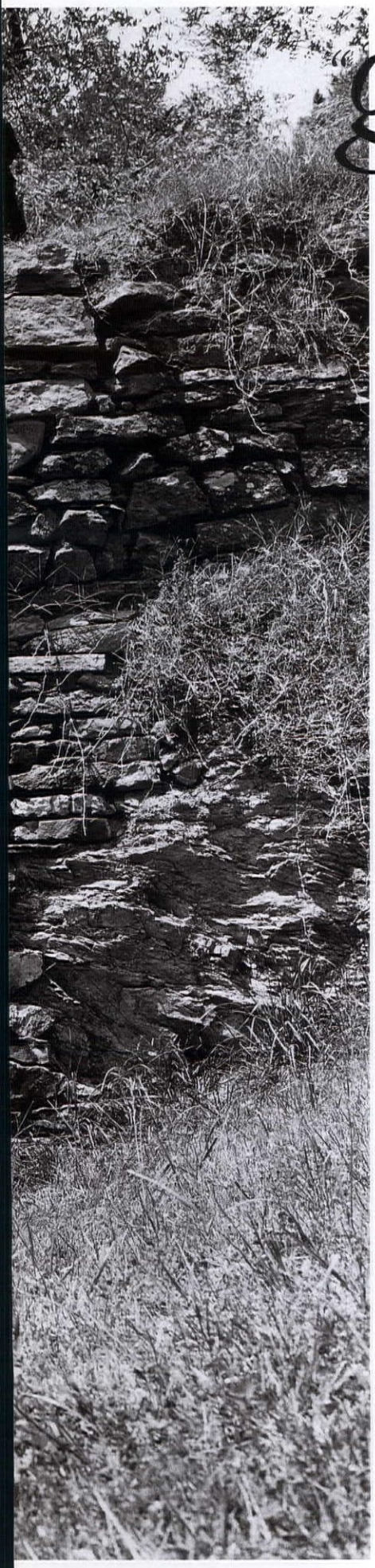
Prada describes the photographs of her garden as a collaboration with photographer Brigitte Lacombe. They are meant to reflect the unrushed quality of Prada's life in Tuscany. Family silver and an old decanter sit on a stone slab, opposite page. The beach-ball sculpture, below, is by Damien Hirst.




"to meditate, in my opinion, means
the ability to laugh with friends,
to go dancing when one feels
like it, to read, to sit in a garden"
— MIUCCIA PRADA



Like the outdoor shower, this page, the pool, opposite page, was added by Prada and designed to be simple enough to fit in with the house and the rest of the garden. Its contours are a plain stone border surrounded by grass



"Gardens should be places where one can feel free to dream, to live out one's deepest fantasies"

—MIUCCIA PRADA



miuccia prada *the short course*

AGE *46*
BORN *Milan*
RESIDENCE *Milan and a 17th-century hospice in Tuscany that she and her husband have converted into a family retreat.*
EDUCATION *Milan University, where she studied political science and became an advocate for leftist causes.*
SIGNATURE *Clothes and accessories that, she says, "whisper rather than shout."*
GREATEST HIT *The black nylon backpack with which she revived the esteemed Prada line.*
NEXT PROJECTS *A Prada line for the home and a collaboration with artist Anish Kapoor on a meditation garden in Milan.*
PHILOSOPHY *"I shall never again do something which I do not feel fully with my heart. I know it will be difficult, but I no longer want to feel contradiction in my life."*



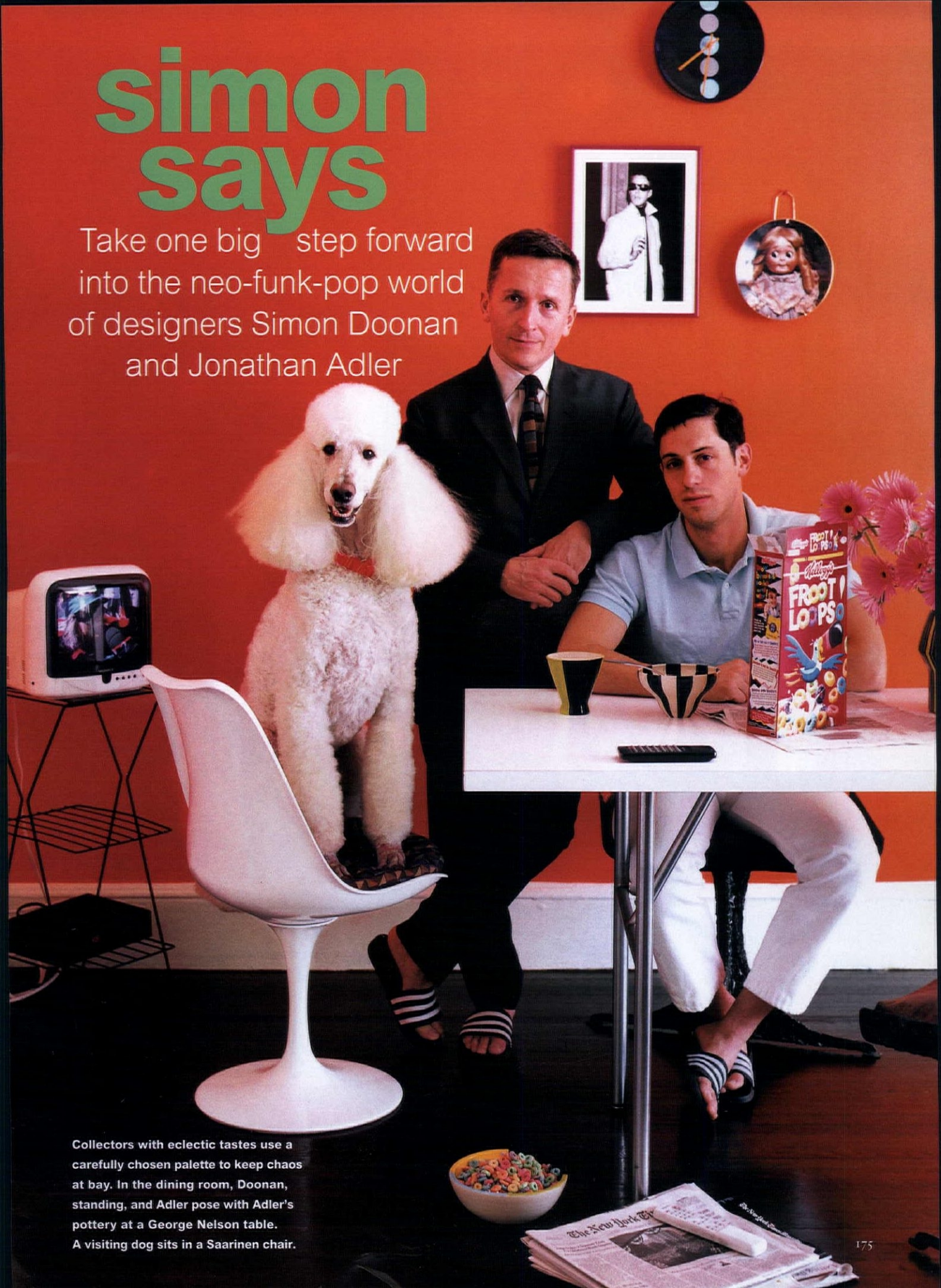
The mantelpiece in the living room, with its metal fire screen by John-Paul Philippé, acts as a background for Doonan's collectibles and Adler's pottery. The mirror framed by a halo of two-by-fours is by Oliver Sanchez. The chair is a Mies van der Rohe.

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE SLESIN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TODD EBERLE STYLED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS

simon says

Take one big step forward into the neo-funk-pop world of designers Simon Doonan and Jonathan Adler



Collectors with eclectic tastes use a carefully chosen palette to keep chaos at bay. In the dining room, Doonan, standing, and Adler pose with Adler's pottery at a George Nelson table. A visiting dog sits in a Saarinen chair.



The fruit of the designers' collaboration is a style that Doonan describes as "Burt Reynolds meets Danish Modern"

the courage of one's convictions

▶ **Doonan and Adler know that rooms of this sort require fearlessness. But their adventurous assemblages are anchored by solid design: The fixtures of plastic cups are offset by the Paul Evans lamps, and furniture by other modern masters, including George Nelson, complements flea-market finds.**



THE MOST MEMORABLE rooms seem to be a blend of the basic building blocks of interior design: form and display. No wonder the Manhattan apartment that Simon Doonan and Jonathan Adler call home has both: it is a seductive intertwining of their talents. Doonan, the executive vice president of creative services for Barneys New York, is considered one of the most imaginative people in fashion-store display; Adler is a ceramist whose playful yet sophisticated home accessories marry colorful surface patterns to sinuous shapes.

Doonan, who worked at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute and at Maxfield, a Los Angeles clothing store, before going to Barneys, describes his twelve-year career there as an amazing roller-coaster ride. His approach at home is effervescent and less frenetic. "I'm more about the temporary arrangements of things," says Doonan. "Jonny is more about creating a residential serenity." Doonan describes the fruit of their collaboration as "Burt Reynolds meets Danish Modern." The unusual furniture plan—a bed juts diagonally into the living room, tables are laid out in a stepping-stone pattern—and the dazzling array of objets d'art and objets trouvés get along very well together, mostly because they have been told to.

The main background to which Adler, thirty-one, and Doonan, forty-five, bring their quirky, singular sensibilities is a spectacular living room ("Charlton Heston brown," says Doonan) with a curved, coffered ceiling that Adler calls baronial. The dining room is "a great Krishna orange," says Doonan. Adler, who likes "anything in chrome, Palm Beach, ceramic leopards, and Lily Pulitzer," says that his taste was shaped by his growing up in Bridgeton, New Jersey, and studying semiotics at Brown University and ceramics at the Rhode Island School of Design. Doonan, who was born outside London to an Irish family, moved to Los Angeles when

The living room, with a coffered ceiling that Adler calls baronial, is offset by lighting fixtures that are made from plastic cups. The George Palumbo bed is set on the diagonal. The Indian cover is from Sarajo, in New York. The table lamps are by Paul Evans. On the sofa, Versace pillows.

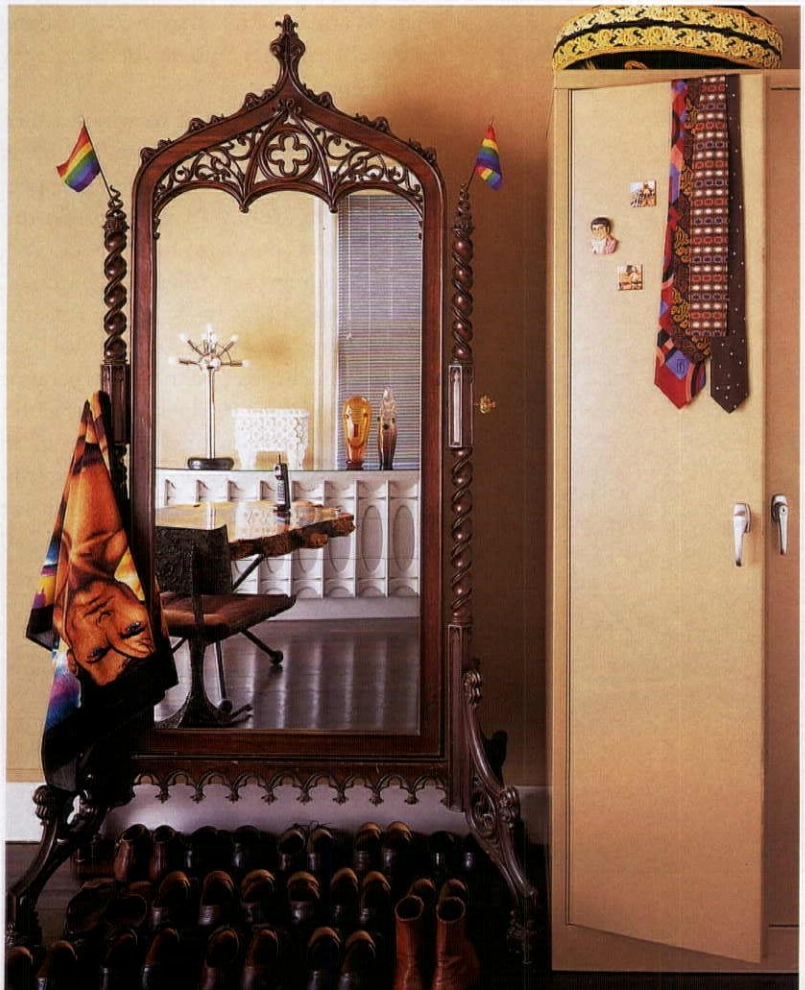
he was twenty-five. He often sees "vestiges of a punk sensibility" in his choices.

The bathroom, with a Pucci-esque, camouflage-hued mural by John-Paul Philippé, Pucci towels, and shelves lined with Doonan's and Adler's awards, is a magnetic draw. Zandra Rhodes, the English fashion designer, said they should put their awards there. "Then everybody gets to see them," says Doonan.

BUT BY THE TIME VISITORS get to the bathroom, they've already had a look at the flotsam and jetsam of visually alert collectors who cast a wide net. "I've flea-marketed my way around the planet," admits Doonan. "If you're acquisitive, you can never really become a minimalist." Still, the pair are calming down on their shopping sprees.

"We've been trying to make the place more severe and less camp," adds Adler. But though the two talk the talk, they have trouble walking the walk. "You aspire to fewer things, but that's the day you go out and find a bust of Michael Jackson that's just like a Jeff Koons sculpture and it's divine, just divine," says Doonan. "That's when you know that *less* is just not to be."





simon doonan

the short course

ORIGINS *Born Simon David Doonan in England of Irish parents in 1952.*

RESIDENCE *Crazy mix of pop detritus, flea-market finds, and fine mid-century and contemporary pieces.*

EDUCATION *Art history and psychology at Manchester University. "But," he says, "I can't remember any of it."*

INFLUENCES *His astrologer grandfather and milliner grandmother for the creative genes. Peter Marino, Andrée Putman, Azzedine Alaïa, Martin Margiela, Annabelle Selldorf, and Rei Kawakubo as some of his on-the-job teachers.*

GREATEST HIT *In the early '90s, toothy, pockmarked papier-mâché mannequins of the famous and infamous, such as Margaret Thatcher and Tammy Faye Bakker, graced the Christmas windows of Barneys.*

QUOTE *"Keep a sense of humor about everything. Ultimately, your biggest satisfactions come from unblocking your own toilet and accumulating airplane mileage."*

The bathroom, opposite page, top, has a Philippé mural and Pucci towels. The standing mirror in the dressing room, below, is from Miami. The Miele dishwasher, this page, is filled with Adler's ceramics, tumblers by Kaj Franck, and Georg Jensen flatware. Sources, see back of book.





carolina's *moving day*

"MOVING IS HELL," SAYS CAROLINA HERRERA. But looking so heavenly doing it is some kind of revenge for a woman who gives new meaning to the notion of making your own clothes. "Packing up, you uncover things you forgot about years ago. Unfortunately, we didn't find any diamonds," the *House & Garden* contributing editor laughs. Carolina and husband, Reinaldo, are still decorating their Manhattan house (which will be featured in an upcoming issue of *House & Garden*), choosing fabrics and hanging the beautiful art he inherited from his mother. Their address is withheld, but "it's in the 212 area code," smiles Carolina. 212 is also the scent she is launching this fall. Coincidence? We think not.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CLAUS WICKRATH PRODUCED BY SENGA MORTIMER STYLED BY CAROLINA IRVING



"There's a parallel between shoes and birds," says designer Christian Louboutin, who sits amidst his glorious euphorbias, opposite page. "We have about a dozen peacocks. They all have a great sense of style."

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM NORWICH PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

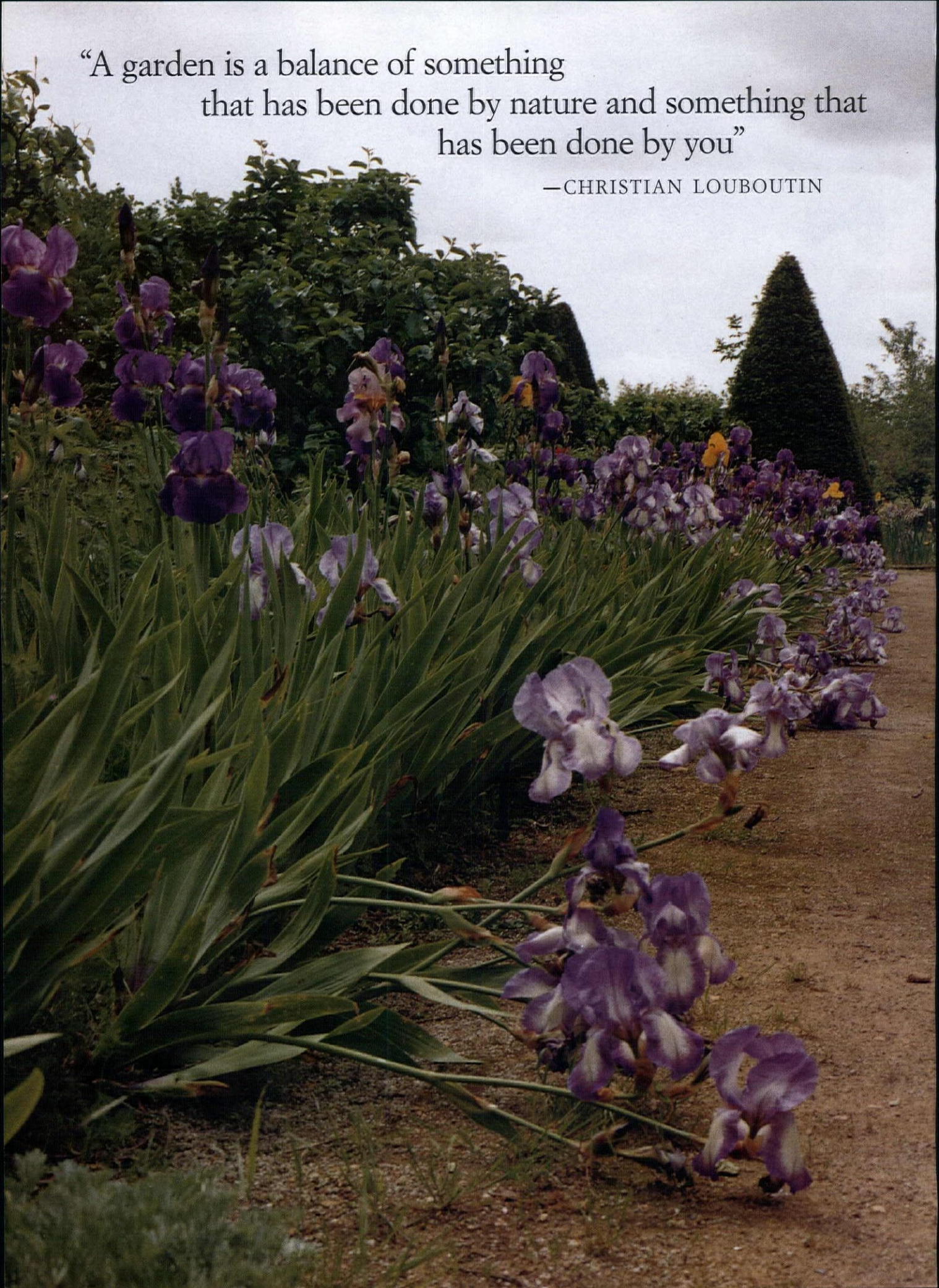
PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING



The Birds of Paradise

Christian Louboutin Finds His Inspiration in a Garden of Fine Feathered Things

"I'm not interested at all in what God is going to do. Some people who garden do it because of that, to see what mysteries of God and nature will unfold. Me? I'm much more interested in what man can do with *his* hands, what he can create in the garden, what the human spirit can draw," explains Christian Louboutin, talking about the spectacular garden at Champgillon, his thirteenth-century château in the Vendée in western France. The Paris-born shoe designer and international bon vivant creates the slippers of choice for such princesses of fashion as


"A garden is a balance of something
that has been done by nature and something that
has been done by you"
—CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



This iris allée, which heads north from the main house, is one part of the intricate puzzle that makes up the plan of Louboutin's garden.





Diane Von Furstenberg and Caroline of Monaco. Because birds—not social birds but birds of the field and sky—inspire him, it is common at Champgillon for peacocks to strut into the house and compete with the guests for attention. "There's a sort of parallel between shoes and birds," Louboutin points out. "Shoes encase a lady's foot, and she flies away."

Chickens, too, have the run of the place. "I love exotic chickens," Louboutin says, smiling. One in particular, a Huppe Hollandaise that wasn't quite ready for its close-up when these pictures were taken, is named Elizabeth Taylor because "it is black-and-white like Elizabeth in *Boom!*" Film references turn up often when Louboutin talks about his garden. He says that a towering maze was inspired by the one in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*. A glade was suggested by a scene he admired in Visconti's film *Ludwig*, in which Romy Schneider, as the athletic Elizabeth of Austria, gallops on horseback into a circle of trees.

LOUBOUTIN SAYS THAT THE THOUSANDS of plants in his garden supply him with "thousands of ideas for colors and materials" for his shoe designs. "Color comes from images. I close my eyes and I see shape and then color in the shape, such as the brown in a very special tree trunk or the green and purple coming out of a small pergola.

"But I used to hate nature," Louboutin adds unashamedly.

He must be putting you on, you figure.

"No, really," he says, and explains that he was a city kid who could not sleep in the country because of the roar of insects and birds that country people revere as peace and quiet. His first job as a shoe designer, at age eighteen, meant Louboutin had to spend long periods at a factory in the south of France. "I was petrified of nature. I couldn't stand it. Animals and insects? I could more easily fly to the moon." That is, until his friend Bruno Chambelland decided nearly twenty years ago to reclaim Champgillon, the house Chambelland's ancestors had lived in for centuries. While he attended to renovating the interiors of the house, Loubutin took to the garden.

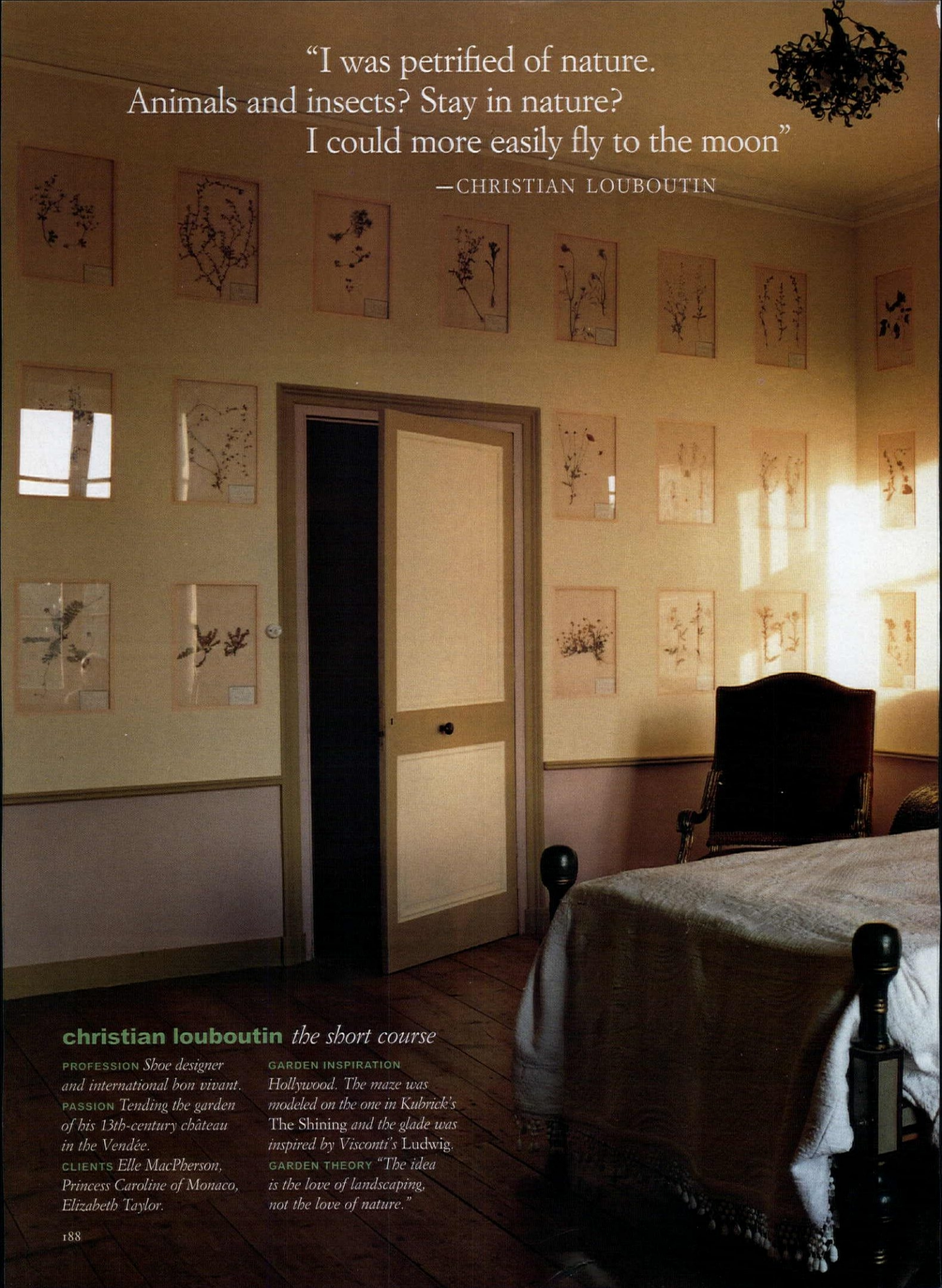
"I always liked to do puzzles," he says. "When I was a teenager in Paris, I would wait to go out until late at night, very late, like three in the morning, and dance until ten. My friends would have these huge dinners before they went out, but I was home doing puzzles. I always loved puzzles, and when I realized creating a garden was like doing a puzzle, *c'est voilà*. Although it takes more subtlety than decorating a house, planning a garden is a mystery to be solved, a series of clues to be unlocked. For instance, if you do a square allée, you don't just see the outside; you must see the inside. You discover. In a garden, like a puzzle, you discover things from every side. It's a balance of seeing something that has been done by nature and something that has been done by you."

He initially approached the garden as a fantasy. He was

The orangerie, top, is as hospitable to birds as it is to humans. The black-and-white Huppe Hollandaise chicken on the terrace, left, is ready for lunch, even if nobody else is.



"Flowers give me thousands of ideas for colors and materials," Louboutin says, and the foxglove and geraniums in the garden of Champgillon appear to await their transformation into elegant footwear.



"I was petrified of nature.
Animals and insects? Stay in nature?
I could more easily fly to the moon"

—CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

christian louboutin *the short course*

PROFESSION *Shoe designer and international bon vivant.*
PASSION *Tending the garden of his 13th-century château in the Vendée.*
CLIENTS *Elle MacPherson, Princess Caroline of Monaco, Elizabeth Taylor.*
GARDEN INSPIRATION *Hollywood. The maze was modeled on the one in Kubrick's* The Shining *and the glade was inspired by Visconti's* Ludwig.
GARDEN THEORY *"The idea is the love of landscaping, not the love of nature."*



Louboutin enjoys seeing the hand of man at work in nature. The walls of the bedroom are covered with framed horticultural collages embedded in the plaster. The bed is 19th-century Directoire, and the headboard is painted with French druids.



Since the 19th-century greenhouse had collapsed, Louboutin had it restored. The doorway is framed by lavender.



The greenhouse is home to plants as well as to Louboutin in the winter: "It is the warmest room in the house," he says. "It's most wonderful when it is snowing and you can go into a hot place, a garden."

enchanted by everything green. But during his first winter there, he saw something else. "Yes, sure, spring is wonderful. The green things start coming, the flowers are in bloom. Winter, however, is the most interesting time. It's more laid-back. You see the bare bones. You see what is missing." The gardens that had been put in at the time the house was built were ruined by a cold spell around the beginning of the century. "But you still had some of the trees," he says. "And some of the allées. The design for the garden was suggested by what was there, and then by what was not there before," he says enigmatically.

Louboutin says he was inspired by the writings of Vita Sackville-West, but by now the designer could probably write his own green guide. Laurel and thuja hedges were planted, an orangerie installed, a greenhouse restored. "A sort of formal French garden was fashioned in fields bought from three farmers. You see, what we and our neighbor, William Christie, hope to do is buy all the land between our two houses and preserve it," Louboutin says. "I planted yucca with the rosebushes so that in winter the bushes wouldn't seem sad. I planted a wildflower garden, and another garden with more green things, and then there is the place which I call the bedroom. It's where you can lie down under the cherry trees.

"About a year ago, I stopped. I was going bankrupt gardening," he laughs. "But what I want next is a big pool, more like a basin. With a trapeze over it. I think it is a good idea to have a trapeze over a swimming pool so you can fall into the water and not get hurt. And another thing I'd like to do at the back of the house is build a wall of rock and conifers, like in the Rocky Mountains in America," Louboutin explains, describing a recent trip he made in a Mustang convertible from the Grand Canyon to Las Vegas. "A sort of rock carpet with square walls where you take the branches one by one and arch them on the other side of the wall in a maze of roots and earth."

Is that all?

"No. It's obsessive, there's always more," offers the former countryphobe before answering one last question.

"I'm usually barefoot in the garden," he smiles.

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Peacock Alley
3210 Armstrong Parkway
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6:00 – 8:30 pm

Space is limited.
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Principle of Design: Simplicity

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Condé Nast House & Garden

Open house

Evian Natural Spring Water Salutes the New York Women's Collection at Saks Fifth Avenue

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Join Evian,
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Enjoy Evian as you take a sneak peak at what's in store for spring. View the looks and styles for the 1998 season with special video monitors displaying the top designers' spring collections, presently showing at 7th on Sixth/Chelsea Piers.

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611 Fifth Avenue
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12:00 – 2:00 pm

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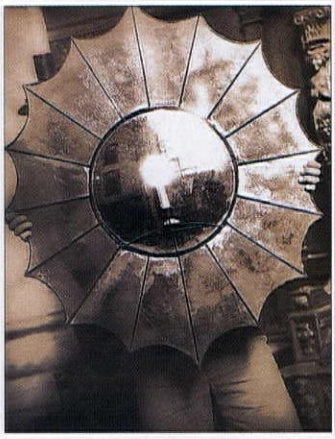
All fabrics available through architects and designers. **Wall fabric**, Damas Valencay, Clarence House, 212-752-2890. **Striped fabric**, Bianca Silk Taffeta Stripe, Brunschwig & Fils, 212-838-7878. **Damask**, Damas Tanlay, Clarence House, 212-752-2890.

DOMESTIC BLISS Pages 33-48

Page 33, Place-card holder, $8, Shì, 233 Elizabeth St., NYC 10012. 212-334-4330. **Saltcellar**, $260, and **salt spoon**, $75, Georg Jensen, 800-546-5253. **Napkin ring**, $130, Tiffany & Co., 800-526-0649. **Napkin**, $20, Muriel Grateau, available at Takashimaya, 800-753-2038. **page 34, Grande Lieu glass**, $140, Saint Louis, available at Barneys New York, 660 Madison Ave., NYC 10022. 212-826-8900. **page 36**, Garnet Hill, 800-622-6216. Saks Fifth Avenue Folio, 800-345-3454. Baker Furniture, 1661 Monroe Ave., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49505. 616-361-732. Léron, 750 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 800-954-6369. **page 40**, Donghia, 800-DONGHIA. **page 46, Globe**, Pottery Barn, 800-922-5507.

HUNTING & GATHERING Pages 55-69

Pages 55-58, Mattresses, Dial-a-Mattress, 800-MATTRES. **page 55-56, Contempo Floral sheets**, Westpoint Stevens, 800-533-8229. **Spring Garden duvet**, $140; **flat and fitted sheet**, $55/ea.; **Euro sham**, $64/ea., and **small square**, $70, Fieldcrest Cannon Inc., 800-841-3336. **King sham**, $88/ea.; **throw**, $120; **full bed skirt**, $125; **full flat and fitted sheet**, $40/ea.; **standard sham in Grey Flannel**, $63/ea., and **boudoir pillow in Grey Flannel**, $63, Guess Home Collection, 800-228-4644. **page 58**, Ralph Lauren Home Collection, 867 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 212-642-8700. **page 60, dress**, $1,290, Missoni Boutique, 836 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 212-517-9339. **Bench by Chris Lehrecke**, Pucci, 44 West 18th St., NYC. 212-633-0452. **Page 62**, Freidman Bros. Dec. Arts, 800-327-1065. **page 64**, Charles Fradin Luminaire, Los Angeles, CA, 310-271-6230. Available through architects and designers. Maureen Fullam Studio, NYC, for information, call: 212-645-5054. La Barge, 800-692-2112. John Rosselli International, 523 E. 73rd St., NYC 10021. 212-772-2137. Available through architects and designers. **page 66**, Holly Hunt Inc., 800-446-1313.



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Pages 62-66

SKETCHES Pages 90-94

John Ragsdale's The Ground Floor, 95 1/2 Broad St., Charleston, SC 29401. 803-722-3576. **Page 92**, Scalamandré, 212-980-3888. **page 94**, Royal Worcester from Replacements, Ltd., 800-REPLACE. Tiffany & Co., 800-526-0649. **Crystal glasses**, Zurich, Baccarat, Inc., 800-363-4700. **Place mats and napkins**, Linens & Lingerie by Johnston's, Inc., 800-824-1958.

DIG IT Pages 96-100

Southmeadow Fruit Gardens, PO Box 211, Baroda, MI 49101. 616-422-2411. Sonoma Antique Apple Nursery, for catalogue requests: 4395 Westside Rd., Healdsburg, CA 95448. 707-433-6420. **Hard cider tastings**, West County Hard Cider, PO Box 29, Colrain, MA 01340. 413-624-3481.

DEALER'S CHOICE Page 102

Carswell Rush Berlin, Inc., NYC, by appointment only: 212-721-0330.

UNCORKED Page 110-112

Glasses from left to right: **Wineglass**, $140, Lalique, available at Barneys New York, 660 Madison Ave., NYC 10022. 212-826-8900. **Betty glass**, $50, William Yeoward, available at Bergdorf Goodman, 800-218-4918. **Vinum red bordeaux wineglass**, $20, Astor Wines & Spirits, 12 Astor Place, NYC 10003. 212-674-7500. **Wineglass**, $165, Lalique, available at Barneys New York. **Wineglass**, $85, Saint Louis, available at Barneys New York. **Eze glass**, $55, William Yeoward, available at Bergdorf Goodman. **Salad plate**, $78, Muriel Grateau, available at Belvedere, 948 Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611. 312-664-4200.

CHÂTEAU GRATEAU Pages 118-127

Muriel Grateau, 29, rue de Valois, 75001 Paris, 33-1-40-20-90-30. Muriel Grateau, 37, rue de Baaune, 75007 Paris.

RECONSTRUCTING FROM MEMORY Pages 128-137

Pages 130-131, Bennison Fabrics, 76 Greene St., NYC 10012. 212-941-1212. **Turkish trunk**, Therien & Co., 411 Vermont St., San Francisco, CA 94107. 415-956-8850. **pages 132-133**, Stephanie Hoppen Ltd., 17 Walton St., London SW3 2HX. 44-171-589-3678. **page 134, Table**, Therien & Co., 411 Vermont St., San Francisco, CA 94107. 415-956-8850. Ed Hardy San Francisco, 188 Henry Adams St., San Francisco, CA 94103. 415-626-6300. **Marble tiles**, Innovative Marble and Tile, 800-62-STONE. **page 135, sisal rug**, Crate & Barrel, 888-249-4155. **pages 136-137**, Quadrille, 212-753-2995. L. Rubelli, Paris, France, 33-1-43-54-27-77.

OLD-WORLD COCOON Pages 140-147

Flowers, Ronaldo Maia Flowers, 27 E. 67th St., NYC 10021. 212-288-1049. **Page 141, Chaise fabric**, Claiborne Imberline, Stroheim & Romann, 718-706-7000. **pages 142-143**, Scalamandré, 212-980-3888. **Napoleon III chair fabric**, Claiborne Imberline. **pages 144-145, canopy fabric**, Claiborne Imberline. **Pillows**, Ralph Lauren Home Collection, 867 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 212-642-8700. Bergamo, 212-888-3333. **pages 146-147, wall fabric**, Claiborne Imberline. **Guest bedroom fabric**, Padovano, Stroheim & Romann.

HOUSES OF STYLE Pages 156-161

Pages 156-157, Belvedere, 948 N. Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611. 312-664-4200. Tiny Jewel Box, 1147 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036. 202-393-2747. Muriel Grateau, 29, rue de Valois, 75001 Paris, 33-1-40-20-90-30. Muriel Grateau, 37, rue de Baaune, 75007 Paris. **pages 158-159, Throw, tray, and Sundish**, select Neiman Marcus stores, 800-756-5784. **Necklace**, Donna Karan London, 800-231-0884. **pages 160-161**, select Gucci stores, 800-388-6785.

SIMON SAYS Pages 174-179

Jonathan Adler's pottery available at: Barneys New York, 660 Madison Ave., NYC 10022. 212-826-8900. Fillamento, 2185 Fillmore St., San Francisco, CA 94115. 888-500-8507. Zipper Two, 8308 W. 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA 90048. 213-951-9252. **pages 176-177**, Sarajo, 98 Prince St., NYC 10012. 212-274-0462. Gianni Versace, 647 5th Avenue, NYC 10022. 212-317-0224. **pages 178-179**, Pucci, 24 E. 64th St., NYC 10021. 212-752-4777. Miele, 800-289-6435. Georg Jensen, 800-546-5253.

& ANOTHER THING Page 196

Gown, $505, La Perla, 777 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 212-570-0050. **Satin slippers by Evelyn Paul**, $250, Takashimaya, 800-753-2038. **Towel**, $70, Anichini la Collezione, 466 N. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048. 310-657-4292. **Pajamas**, $450, Sulka, NYC, 212-980-5200. **Brown slippers by Gucci**, $135, Bergdorf Goodman Men, 800-218-4918. **Eye mask**, $10, Boyd's, 655 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10021. 212-838-6558.

PHOTO CREDITS

Past Perfect: *House & Garden*, Feb. 1948, courtesy of CNP Archives. **Carolina's Moving Day**: Hair and makeup by Stefano Antoniazzi for Trilise, Inc.

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Condé Nast HOUSE & GARDEN (ISSN-1087-9528) is published monthly by The Condé Nast Publications Inc., 350 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Steven T. Florio, President & Chief Executive Officer; David B. Chemidlin, Treasurer; Jill Henderson, Secretary. Periodical postage paid at New York, New York 10001 and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as Second-Class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 0978027. Canadian Goods and Services Tax Registration No. R123242885. Subscription: In the U.S. and possessions, $18 for one year, $34 for two years. In Canada, $32 for one year including GST and HST where applicable. Elsewhere, $37 for one year, payable in advance. Single copies: U.S. $2.95; Canada $3.50. For subscriptions, address changes, and adjustments, write to Condé Nast HOUSE & GARDEN, P.O. Box 56145, Boulder, CO 80322-6145. Eight weeks are required for change of address. Please give both new and old address, as printed on last label. SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES: Please write to Condé Nast HOUSE & GARDEN, P.O. Box 56145, Boulder, Colorado 80322-6145, or call 1-800-234-1520. First copy of new subscription will be mailed within eight weeks after receipt of order. Volume 166 Number 11
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES
POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO CONDÉ NAST HOUSE & GARDEN, P.O. BOX 56145, BOULDER, COLORADO 80328-6145.

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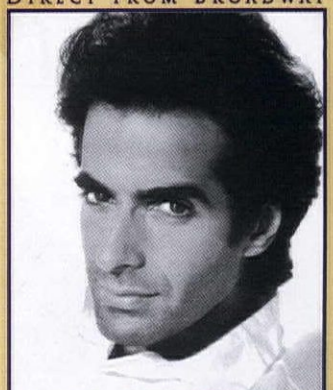
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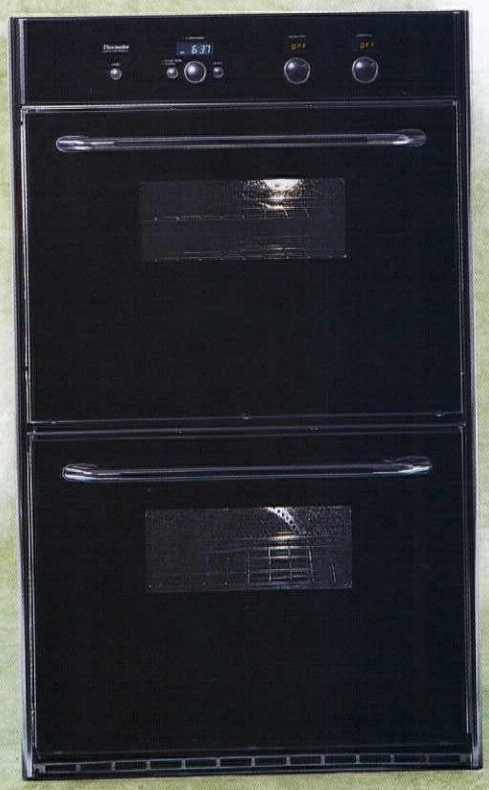


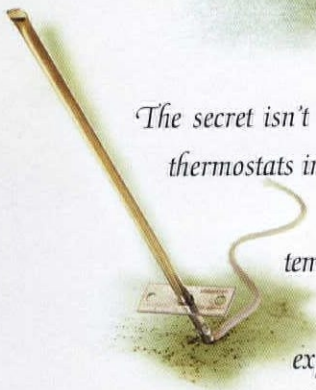
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